DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 184 587 IR 008 285

AUTHOR Colson, John C.
TITLE The Public Library Movement in Nineteenth Century Wisconsin.
PUB DATE 75
NOTE 351p.: Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1973. Revised.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC15 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Political Issues: *Public Libraries: Social Change: *Social Development: *State History: United States History

ABSTRACT

The inception and development of the public library in Wisconsin as a tax-supported popular library governed by an autonomous appointed board is discussed in detail. Topics covered include the evolution of legislation for public libraries for Wisconsin and other states: the history of library associations, or social libraries, transplanted from New England, with a discussion of their activities: the transition from library associations to public libraries, viewed as an effort to reach individuals in a more educational manner: and the development and political issues of the public library movement. A 9-page selected bibliography and appendices containing historical materials on the library associations, public library legislation, and gifts to public libraries in Wisconsin are attached. (SW)

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THE PUBLIC LIBRARY MOVEMENT
IN NINETEENTH CENTURY WISCONSIN

by

John C. Colson

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Introduction and Acknowledgements

The American public library was for a century (ca. 1850-1950) a unique institution. Other European nations had public libraries, but none were like those in the United States, tax supported popular libraries, governed by autonomous appointed boards, and intended to serve as extra-school educators to the entire nation. Their uniqueness has been a source of substantial, even excessive pride among librarians. However, that pride also has been based in the good intentions of those same librarians, and there has been remarkably little study of the development of the institution. Among librarians history is a method for indoctrination of students in their professionalism rather than a way of informing themselves about the institutions they serve; and an elegant variety of misinformation is contained in many librarians' statements about the development of the public library.

There have been many studies of particular public libraries. Most of these -- nearly all of them -- have been written by candidates for the master's degree in librarianship; some have been doctoral dissertations; most of the remainder have been works commissioned for the occasion of a significant anniversary in a library's existence. Nearly all of the authors have restricted their attention to intrainstitutional development, and have tended to accept librarians' expostulations that the public library is a natural manifestation of democratic tendencies in American society. This pleasant professional myth is most elaborately presented in Sidney Ditzion's Arsenals of a Democratic Culture (Chicago: American Library Association, 1947), still one of the most significant works in the history of American public librarianship. The myth is no less mythical for all the sophistication and grace of Mr. Ditzion's work. The other principal work in American public library history is Jesse Shera's Foundations of the Public Library (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949). It is a study of the social influences in New England which led to the establishment of the public library there. Still seminal, it is weakened by an overly ambitious scope, covering all six of the New England Colonies cum States, 1629-1855. The result was a diffuse statement of causation which was not focused on the conservative orientation of public library development.

Surprisingly, there are only three published studies of public library development in the various States of the Union. Gwladys Spencer's Chicago Public Library: Backgrounds and Origin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), and Ray Held's two studies of public library history in California, Public Libraries in California, 1849-1878 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963) and The Rise of the Public Library in California (Chicago: American Library

Association, 1973).

Ms. Spencer concentrated on events leading to the establishment of the Chicago Public Library, but she did pay some attention to public library development in Illinois, and interpreted it as revolving around events in Chicago. Mr. Held's two studies are concentrated on selected highlights of public library development in California; he did not attempt an interpretative study of a statewide movement.

In the United States in the nineteenth century the State was never a laboratory for governmental development; the process was not that coherently rationalized. The State was, however, the center around which governmental development was organized, and it is in that context that this study of public library development in Wisconsin is based.

The first modern American public library was established in Peterborough, New Hampshire, in 1833. It remained the only institution of its kind for fifteen years, until in 1848 the Massachussets Legislature authorized the City of Boston to establish a public library on a model nearly identical to the Peterborough Public Library. The Massachusetts Act may be interpreted as ratification of a developing trend in New England, where an eighteenth century institution, the social library described by Jeremy Belknap in his History of New Hampshire (Boston, 1792-94), was expiring in the social changes prompted by the industrialization and urbanization of New England. The public library established in Boston was to have a profound influence on the development of the American public library. It became the archetype.

Other models were tinkered with in other States, especially in New York and Ohio, where there were serious attempts to establish public libraries under school district jurisdiction, e.g., the Cleveland Public Library which remains such a library. subordinate to the Board of Education. In Indiana, for another example, from 1816 to the 1830's there was an attempt to establish public libraries as a county responsibility, with public support mandated in the State Constitution.

The Boston model received its archetypical status in the 1870's when a number of State Legislatures in the Old Northwest and Upper Midwest - - Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Wisconsin - - authorized municipalities to establish public libraries on organizational bases closely similar to the Boston Public Library. Wisconsin's Public Library Act of 1872 was the first such authorization in the region, and probably served as the model for the Illinois Act a few months later.

From 1830 until the Civil War the most significant migration to Wisconsin was that of the Yankee. He and his cohorts made up a majority of the population, and Yankee institutions were established in Wisconsin. This occurred just at the time that New Englanders were turning from the social library of Belknap's era to the public library as developed in Peterborough and Boston. Of course, the Yankee in Wisconsin did not take readily to the new-fangled ideas of Boston, and for the most of the remainder of the century he relied upon the familiar social library as the organizational model for public libraries.

In the 1850's a new tide of immigrants began to flow into Wisconsin. Concomitantly, industrialization and urbanization began their swift development, and unfamiliar forms of social organization began to work their changes in the Yankee Commonwealth which had been created in Wisconsin during 1836-1848. Although many of these changes were defined as progress and were welcomed by the Yankees - - some of whom were among the most energetic promoters of progress - - they also carried a threat to destroy the Yankees' culture. Thus, even as some Yankees were striving to reap the maximum in the material rewards of progress, others, including some of the most "progressive," were engaged in a simultaneous search for mechanisms which would preserve the values established in the forms and institutions of New England in Wisconsin. Among these mechanisms were public schools, and, later, public libraries.

The libraries were established in nonchalance, perhaps seen as useful but not entirely necessary devices for the preservation of the Yankee heritage. In any event, they were a relatively uncontroversial matter; the Public Library Act of 1872 does not appear to have been debated even in the

Legislature. For the remainder of the century there continued a strong reliance on the New England social library as the model for public library organization; other models were given little attention.

During those same decades librarianship itself was undergoing substantive change, losing its dilletantish attributes under the impact of a developing professionalism among librarians. The increasing numbers and variety of printed materials were the ultimate causes for this professionalism, as the collection and organization of materials became an ever more complex vocation; but librarians were quick to recognize the social potential of their professionalism, and during 1885-1900 they won (rather easily) effective control of the public library movement. As late as 1890 the public library movement in Wisconsin, when there were still only twelve Boston-type institutions in the State, was severely localized and under the control of amateurs. By the end of the century the condition had been reversed. A State-wide association of professionals and their allies, and a State agency directed by professionals were assuming management and direction of the movement and the institutions created by it. The professionals' sense of mission and motives, for the most part, were closely similar to those of the New Englanders who brought the movement to Wisconsin, but the movement itself had been altered profoundly. Public libraries now were the business of the State, and almost mandated by it.

At the close of the 19th century the public library movement in Wisconsin had been transformed into a system for the development of public library service for all residents of Wisconsin. Much of the character of the earlier movement would remain with the new one, and the objectives established by and for the public librarians in Wisconsin in 1890-1900 have not yet been achieved, at least not to the satisfaction of public librarians now in charge of the movement; and probably not to the satisfaction of Frank Hutchins, Lutie Stearns and James Stout, were they able to view the workings of the system. Probably this is as it should be, for in the years since 1900 a new Wisconsin has been created, retaining much of its nineteenth century character, but confronted with new problems and opportunities for the people of Wisconsin, including its public librarians.

A work such as this never is completed without the author's incurring a number of scholarly and personal obligations to those who have assisted in the adventure. The circumstances in which this work has been done have been especially accumulative of such obligations, and only a few can be acknowledged here. Two of my professors, Leon Carnovsky and Howard Winger of the University of Chicago Graduate Library School, under whose direction an earlier version was begun and completed, gave generously of their time and critical intelligence in criticism of the work.

Much of whatever value is in it is to their credit. Several colleagues have been most helpful in a variety of ways but a special obligation is owed to four: Richard Erney, of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, for unfailing courtesies in support of research; to Douglas Ball, Librarian College of Librarianship, Wales, for both courtesies and friendship offered to a stranger; and to Dean Margaret Chisholm and Professor Jerry Kidd, of the University of Maryland College of Library and Information Services, for support and encouragement during a critical period in the completion of the dissertation on which this work is based. Finally, to Marjorie, John B., Ruth and Stuart, I owe a special debt for support, encouragement and love beyond any call of familial duty.

"Circulating libraries are devices for leavening the ordinary mind with the yeast of greatness. We cannot have too many of them."

Kenosha TELEGRAPH - COURIER, 28 May 1896: 4

Chapter 1

The Conservative Impetus to Public Library Development in Wisconsin

In 1825 Wisconsin was a wilderness bisected by a tenuous line of American outposts at Fort Howard, Fort Winnebago and Fort Crawford. The entire civil population at these posts may not have exceeded five hundred. Twenty-five years later the 305,000 people of Wisconsin stood just inside the threshold of the Union. Nearly all of them lived to the south of the line of forts mentioned above. Half or more were of New England -- New York birth or ancestry, and the political and social characteristics of the State reflected that preponderance of the population.[1] To a significant extent the people of this new State had re-created a New England Commonwealth. This new Commonwealth, however, was not of Boston, nor of New York City. The Yankees in Wisconsin were the descendants of the Green Mountain Boys, of the "Embattled Farmers" of Concord, of the upland farmers of western Massachusetts and western New York. They saw the new State as the realization of their ideals, a State composed of independent farmers associated in the simple communities of free towns, free churches, free schools: no man an island, but every man free to work out his destiny without the need for obeisance to a remote and tyrannical government.

Events already had begun to overwhelm that vision. Technological development in communication and transportation, the gathering tide of immigrants, new forms of economic organization, and new concentrations of political power were all at work toward the transfiguration of the dream. Irrepressible change was at hand. Whatever idyll the State-makers envisioned the next fifty years were to see the development of Wisconsin into something remarkably different. In the 1850s steel rails began to create networks of communities which had not been foreseen in the State Constitution; alongside the rails the telegraph wires fashioned yet other bonds to the world outside Wisconsin's borders. Along the rivers factory chimneys began to loom over the forests, and industrial societies sprouted in this Eden. Cities were still another unexpected element in the State, but in the same decade Milwaukee's population leaped from twenty to seventy thousand; in Appleton, Beloit, Green Bay, Janesville, Kenosha, LaCrosse, Oshkosh, Racine, Sheboygan - - townships all - - urbanization was under way.[2]

Even as Wisconsin's people grappled with the problems attendant to these developments their already troubled confidence in the future was further disturbed by the onset of the Depression of 1873. At first it was considered to be only another "panic;" but it wore on beyond the mid-point of the decade, and the restless discontent of the urban unemployed broke the bounds of passive acceptance of "hard times" as the workers' natural lot. Working men began to organize into unions, and the great strike of the post-Reconstruction period raised in America the spectre of class warfare. Industrial warfare came to Wisconsin in the Eight Hour Movement of 1886, and in its aftermath Wisconsin working men were warned repeatedly not to follow the example of their Eastern brethren. With the easing of the Depression there came a lessening of the tensions, but the issues of unions and strikes continued to be sources of concern.[3]

The industrialization of economic activities provoked another source of distress: the dangerous conditions on the railroads, the steamships, in the factories, the hotels and the other adjuncts of the accumulating industrialization and urbanization in the State. Major catastrophes such as the sinking of the Steamship Erie in 1863, the Newhall House fire in Milwaukee in 1868, and the boiler explosion at the Whiting Mill in Neenah in 1888 could be and were explained away as the result of the random wrath of a stern God, or the workings of an indifferent Fate; indeed, the dismal fates of individual victims were explained in the same ways, or as the fruits of negligence by the victims. Nevertheless, the daily catalog of industrial horror produced a strong impression of the dangers in industrial life. "Too bad," wrote a Neenah editor in his report of one accident, "but a willingness to take risks is one of the first requisites for a good paper mill man." Similar sentiments appeared in many another account of industrial misfortune. They may be interpreted as callousness in those grown inured to such scenes, but in some they also represented a profound suspicion of industrial society.[4]

The physical dangers of work in the factories and on the railroads were one thing, but many New Englanders in Wisconsin were disturbed even more by the social and moral qualities of industrial life and the cities in which industry was located. Their disturbance centered around a concern for one element of the American people: young men, especially those who went from the farm to the city in search of larger opportunities than were offered by rural life. Rural Americans knew well the temptations offered by the city, especially to young men just arrived there, and innocent of its wickedness. The concern for the young men, however, transcended a simple belief in their innocent unpreparedness, and even went beyond a belief, present in some observers, of young men's inherent tendencies to sinfulness. Unless they went to the city with well established connections young men were known to be putting themselves into a monstrously indifferent place.

In fact, the young man who went to the city went to a place which was not organized to receive him into a community, nor even to make him comfortably at home. He had to find lodgings, a place to eat, employment, friends and recreation largely on his own. In the larger cities not even the churches were prepared to offer much assistance in these matters. Even some who were sent to strange cities on business trips had the same problems, such as one who came to Sheboygan in 1889, and found it indifferent to his social needs. If there were no provisions for such as him, then what of those who came on their own, and with uncertain purpose? Apparently, the problems of employment and survival kept them occupied during the days, but at night, a gentle time for country folk, the "homeless" young man in the city felt his spirit eroding in loneliness.[5]

There were in the cities unknown numbers of these young unfortunates; men who lived in bleak and shabby boarding houses where living conditions were uncomfortably graceless if not intolerable. And it was emphasized that they were not the shiftless castoffs from rural society, but decent, hard-working young men. If the circumstances in which they were compelled to live were better known it would surprise no one ". . . to find that the saloon gathers him in by its superior attractiveness . . . that in a fearful sense the cheap boarding house is the best ally the saloon can have."[6]

The changes in Wisconsin most apparent to its founders, however, were those in the speech, dress and customs of their ever increasing numbers of fellow citizens. By 1900 the State's population increased to more than two million.

Wisconsin received a particularly rich admixture of people; it became best known for its large German element, but there were also significant numbers of people from the Baltic States, Britain, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Poland, the Scandanavian countries, Serbia and Switzerland. All of these people displayed a strong tendency to settle among their own; even the British continued to emphasize their identity as Cornish, English, Irish, Scots and Welsh. Despite subsequent statements about America, the great "melting pot," the fact is that these groups did not mix much. Entire villages, townships, small cities, sometimes entire counties, were noted for particular ethnic concentrations. Thus New Glarus was Swiss, Stoughton was Norwegian, Milwaukee was German, Sheboygan even more so, and Stevens Point was Polish.[7]

The Yankees were there first. They established the forms and institutions of government and business, but in a number of other matters they came to feel that their culture was endangered by the immigrant flood. The public school, for example, was regarded by the Yankees as a fundamental element in their democracy. In Wisconsin Roman Catholic and Lutheran groups established strong parochial school systems; in both there were strong tendencies toward instruction exclusively in German, particularly in the rural schools. In 1888 a nativist Legislature passed the Bennett Law, which required that in all schools in the State at least half of instruction would be conducted in English. The uproar over this was great, and the Bennett Law became the issue of the 1890 elections. Nearly every Republican was swept out of State office; only ten per cent of the members of the Assembly were re-elected, and the losers included all the majority officers of the 1888 session.[8]

In some other matters the Yankees did not attempt to give direct legal expression to their concern for their culture, but they voiced their apprehensions in a variety of ways. As early as 1851, in Milwaukee, "Viola" wrote a pathetic complaint that the Germans there did not support "American" music. In 1856 Simon W. Smith, Propietor of the Manitowoc Tribune, observed that "Americans" were the people most blessed with intellectual character, but that "foreigners" were low in their esteem for "scientific exercises." During the 1860s two Presidents of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association spoke their regret that Milwaukee's Germans were not supporting the Association in significant numbers. Somewhat ironically, however, in 1867 Judge Arthur MacArthur, speaking at the dedication of the Association's new rooms, saluted the Germans of the city for their industry and thrift, virtues which he said derived from their love of books; by way of contrast he pointed out the Italians in Milwaukee, "going about our streets with a monkey-show and a barrell organ" - - the fruit of centuries of ignorance which arose from a lack of books. In 1878 when the Milwaukee Public Library was established, German-American leaders demanded representation on the Board of Directors, and the demand was met by displacement of two former Young Men's Association directors. The Sentinel objected strongly, arguing that what counted in the makeup of the Board was not nationality but experience, but overlooking the fact that the displaced members' experience had been with an Association that failed. In 1890 the Manitowoc County Chronicle warned the Two Rivers Advancement Association that "cheap labor" no longer was wanted there, because it contributed nothing to the place but a heavy burden upon prosperous taxpayers. When the Sheboygan Public Library was organized in 1897 the Directors appointed were almost exclusively from the German-American community there, and the Yankee Times of Sheboygan voiced its distress that not one of the leaders of the Sheboygan Library Association had been named to the Board. In all of the above and many other occasions the Yankees in Wisconsin gave voice to a theme of fear that they would be submerged in the new society developing there.[9]

It is feasible to view the history of Wisconsin from many aspects; its past has been eventful, and there have been many colorful men and women involved in the events which took place there. In the nineteenth century a wilderness was subdued to make a home for a strong and prosperous society which has to its credit a number of remarkable achievements. Thus there has been reason for the tendency of most historians of Wisconsin to see the development of the State as a record of successful progress toward a better ordering of the relationships among men, toward the realization of a "more perfect union." Even events which at the time were a source of most profound despair have been seen as bearing results which made an ultimate contribution to that progress, such as the Civil War. However, those same events were for many in Wisconsin the cause of bewilderment and doubt.

The New Englanders in Wisconsin were disturbed by the excrudescences of a developing industrial society, but they also appreciated its material benefits, and possessed an optimism "stirred by perfectionist impulses." They believed that the ideals and values they brought to Wisconsin could be asserted throughout the population of the State, and applied with happy result to the problems of the society. Their mission, as they saw it, was to find the instruments of "moral and mental improvement" which would resolve the problems. Characteristically, optimistically, they relied on their experience to provide the instruments and methods appropriate to the problem, and a number of them were ready to hand. Some involved education and the use of books.

In some ways public library development in Wisconsin followed a course parallel to that of the public schools. Although public schools in Wisconsin are outside the scope of this work the provision of school libraries was in some respects related to public library development, and discussion of the matter helps illuminate the library movement. The 1847

Constitution authorized school districts to establish libraries, on their own initiative. In the first ten years of Statehood fewer than one fourth of the districts did so, but this inactivity was ignored until after Lyman Draper became State Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1858. He found the school district libraries to be "small and almost worthless," with an average holding of fewer than nineteen volumes. Under his prodding the Legislature in 1859 passed a school library act which authorized ten percent of the school tax to be used for school libraries. The fund was to be held in the State Treasury, and to be apportioned back to the townships upon their establishment of libraries. The act never was put into effective operation, although over $60,000 accumulated in the fund by 1862. Then the legislature, hard pressed for funds with which to pay for State contributions to the war effort, repealed the act and borrowed the fund, pledging to pay it back after the war. The repayment never was made, and the Legislature made no other provision for school libraries until 1887.[10]

The repeal of the act prompted little reaction, and it is obvious that at the time the people of Wisconsin did not see the library as a necessary adjunct to the school. Draper and other "friends of education" were ahead of the people in this matter. There was not so much concern because the values of the society still were regarded as adequate to the problems of Wisconsin, and the outlines and scope of the developing assault on a pastoral democracy were not yet clear. On this frontier there was an easy optimism for the future. There were difficult tasks, even onerously unpleasant ones ahead, but the work of opening up and settling a new State was well known. The Yankee had been engaged successfully in this for more than two centuries, and his values and virtues were sufficient to the task. There were even surplus energy and resources available for application to higher concerns. Within three years of the settlement of Milwaukee a group of prominent men met to organize the Milwaukee Lyceum, for the intellectual development of themselves and those within their influence. This kind of optimism continued to find expression as the wave of settlement moved across the State to the north and west. In 1856 some of the young men of Manitowoc, a new village from which the stumps were not yet removed, organized themselves into a library and literary association, an event which was interpreted as proof of the high character and stability of the community. In Ashland in 1872, even as the Town was being re-organized amid the ruins of an earlier settlement, Charles Pratt and Samuel Fifield interpreted the organization of the Ashland Library Association in terms which indicated their satisfaction about the morale of the community. In such interpretations, however, there was a strongly conservative, even nostalgic, reference to the kind of society their makers wished Wisconsin to become, rather than the one which was developing there.[11]

It was only a generation earlier that the young Abraham Lincoln had endured those long treks through a half-tamed wilderness in search of books, and the story of those lonely walks had not yet achieved its legendary proportion so familiar to later generations. In Wisconsin such a legend would have had difficulty getting born, for books were not that scarce a commodity. Aside from the fact that the settlers brought books with them as a matter of course, book publishing in the United Stated had increased greatly since the introduction of the steam press, and a great variety of them were available in Wisconsin. For example, when Lyman Draper became Secretary of the State Historical Society in 1854 its library contained only fifty volumes. Working without assistance, and almost without funds, in just one year Draper increased the number to more than one thousand, plus another thousand "phamphlets and documents." In Milwaukee, Sidney Rood opened a bookstore and bindery in 1846; in 1851 another Milwaukee entrepreneur began to advertise the "English Circulating Library" in which could be obtained all the works of more than two dozen popular novelists, and an extensive variety of dramatic works, and the privilege of exchanging books every other day, for as little as one dollar per quarter. In 1858 the Manitowoc Tribune carried a local bookseller's advertisements of a long list of "cheap novels," some priced as low as twenty-five cents. In many communities where there was not a book store the local newspaper office was a reliable source of books.

The pioneers in urban parts of Wisconsin were not book-starved, and as the development of the State continued the scarcity of reading materials became less and less a matter of concern until, toward the end of the century, the expression of such concern was directed at increasing the number and quality of books available to farmers and other rural residents of Wisconsin, such as the men who worked in the lumber camps. Indeed, during the first five years of its operations (1986-1900) the Wisconsin Free Library Commission devoted a high proportion of its resources and time to the establishment of travelling libraries in Wisconsin's rural areas.[12]

The impulse to establish public libraries in Wisconsin may have stemmed as much from the abundance of books as from any other factor. The statement appears to be a paradox; actually it was the situation which Yankees in Wisconsin saw developing there which was paradoxical. The society which they created was changing before their eyes, and they could neither entirely understand nor control the processes of change. They attempted in a variety of ways to prevent, delay, or mitigate the changes; one of the instruments they hoped would be effective was the library. Its books would be the instruments for the preservation of the values they though essential to their society. With them they would educate the rest of the State in those values.

For those who sought to have books used in this manner there was an additional factor which complicated their task: the problems they attempted to solve through the use of books did not remain constant, and thus the library promoters were unable to devise a coherent theory of the use of books. The result was an advocacy which itself continued to change in nature, was frequently confused, and sometimes contained contradictory elements. Indeed, several of the bookish problems faced by the library promoters, such as the place of fiction in the public library, were not resolved during the nineteenth century, and remained sources of controversy until well into the twentieth.[13]

In the Territorial years and during the early years of Statehood the moral problems perceived by the New Englanders to be confronting the people of Wisconsin were defined in expressions of concern for souls rather than society. Thus the Female Moral Reform Society of the Village of Milwaukee was organized in 1839 to save the young from the corruptions of strong drink, "impure novels" and the theater. Thus in 1855 the Watertown Democrat published a long letter from "Infidelity," who warned with fearful example of the sad fate awaiting those who read the wrong books.[14] However, advice on books was not generally so negative in character. The right sorts of books were seen as sources of wisdom, and their use was to be encouraged. A "literary taste" was believed to counteract baser influences, and the development of this taste was seen as part of the "moral and intellectual improvement" to be brought about by the numerous young men's and library associations.

There was also a developing concern for the social costs of sin. In 1856 the Watertown Democrat argued that to supply the entire community with books sufficient for five years' reading would cost far less than one tenth of that of the ". . . vice and idleness of a single year, caused by the want of something useful to read . . . ." The same year, Simon Smith said in the Manitowoc Tribune, "If the importance of literary education were fully felt, much might be accomplished in doing away with the various species of vice, which now infest society."[15] Such generalized statements about the value of books in the prevention of vice and sin continued to be made by the advocates of books and libraries, and there also developed a tendency for such statements to become more explicit about the use of library agencies for the prevention of crime, accompanied with an increasing emphasis on the reduction of the costs of crime.

In 1863 the Janesville Young Men's Literary Union (predecessor to the Young Men's Association) urged support for its library as a refuge for children which would protect them from the city's "alluring elements" of crime and sin. The Madison Wisconsin State Journal, urging support for the Madison Institute, referred to experience in eastern cities which, it asserted, had found it more economical to build libraries than prisons. The Ladies Temperance Union of Janesville, in 1875, argued the necessity for their library on similar grounds, with an additional assertion that the existence of asuylums and reformatories raised grave questions of public policy. Two years later, when the issue of a public library for Janesville first became a significant one "Citizen" wrote to ask whether his fellow townsmen preferred to spend their tax monies for jails or for schools and libraries. The Gazette stated the proposition more positively: "Our tax-papers will do well to remember that it is a part of the most economical and effectual police system." Five years later, in the midst of the Janesville Library Association's effort to establish a public library, "X" wrote to the Gazette that in experience and scholarship both it had been demonstrated that the provision of libraries resulted in a stronger "moral tone" in society, and that the establishment of one in Janesville, at a fraction of the cost for police and jails, would decrease the need for the latter. A few months later "G" put a simpler argument to the same conclusion: "A public library, wisely selected, strangles the dime novel and other corrupting trash . . . lessening candidates for our jails and other penal tread mills." In 1895, in Baraboo, the Reverend Richard Douthit (Free Congregational Church) referred to English experience in the reduction of crime through the provision of public libraries. That same year, G. W. Johnston argued that if Kenosha had a public library city government would cost less because, among other things, decreased crime would result in lower city expenses.[16]

Many such arguments for the public library contained a strong concern for the welfare of the individual, but one which tended to be expressed in terms of social profit. For example, Reverend Douthit believed the public library would be a "paying investment" if the use of it inspired just one boy to a "noble, manly career." It is noteworthy also that many of the statements cited above advocated the public library as an instrument which would save public funds, with the implicit corollary that taxes would be decreased. This was a matter of great interest to the business men of Wisconsin, who tended to dominate local government. They believed deeply in the Jeffersonian doctrine of least government. In the light of that belief the New Englanders in Wisconsin had difficulty in accepting as legitimate the claims for public support of institutions they had been taught were best supported by private benevolence or through the association of interested individuals. They found it difficult also to accept the idea that the public institutions which this new society appeared to require should be turned over to direction by those who had no clear interest in the government, and putting those institutions under the control of elected or appointed officials appeared to mean exactly that.[17]

As a result of such attitudes opinion about the proper way to finance public libraries remained divided throughout the century, with the preponderance slowly settling in favor of the tax supported institution. As early as 1856 the Watertown Democrat argued that the provision of books for the people was a state responsibility, and support for the idea accumulated steadily.

Nevertheless, the doctrine that public ends could be achieved best through private acts remained strong, and sometimes a source of confusion. A year after his public library bill became law Alexander Graham argued that private associations were necessary to the carrying out of public enterprises. When the Milwaukee Sentinel endorsed the Young Men's Association proposal for a public library it also indicated some reservations, in principle, about tax supported educational facilities. In the same year, Mayor Norcross of Janesville admitted the desirability of public libraries, but reminded his audience that the use of tax monies to provide libraries and other desirable facilities threatened to place an unbearable burden on the taxpayers. In 1888 Mayor Neville of Green Bay asked for the establishment of a free public library, but he insisted that it should be accomplished by private subscription. Seven years later in Lake Geneva, after property for a library site was offered by the wealthy Sturgis Family, the Herald pleaded fervently for other wealthy residents to provide the funds to complete the establishment of a public library, but made no mention of a method by which its operation or development might be financed.[18]

Responses to this divided belief developed unevenly across the State. One result of the divisions was the presentation of a body of arguments which emphasized the material rewards which communities would realize through the establishment of public libraries. For the most part, such promises were vaguely stated. John R. Baltzell, presiding at the final meeting of the Madison Institute, told his audience that the prosperity of the city depended largely upon its provision of cultural institutions and opportunities. "A Taxpaying Citizen" of Janesville advocated the public library as "an economy and a convenience to the best citizens of the city," and "fraught with untold blessings to the poorer classes." That is, he could explain its advantages for one group, but not for the other. The Janesville Daily Recorder argued that the small tax requested for the public library was an investment which would not yield as large a return if spent in any other way. E. C. McFetridge, one of the founders of the Beaver Dam Library Association saw the prospects somewhat differently: that the money spent for a public library advertised the "high character and public spirit" of the city. The Waukesha Freeman advocated a public library as an institution which would "advance" both the material and intellectual interest of the village. Reverent Douthit told the people of Baraboo, "In fact, a public library of the right sort cannot help making a city more progressive, more intelligent, more cultured, more moral, more prosperous." The Ashland Press spoke of the "ethical and commercial prestige" the city gained from the Vaughn Library.[19]

As the above instances indicate such pronouncements usually gave some emphasis to ethical or intellectual benefits to be derived from a public library, but frequently there was a more specific assertion of material values. The Janesville Gazette was emphatic about it: "In dollars and cents it will pay . . . ." A writer to the Waukesha Freeman, conscious of the village's status as a summer resort, asserted that a public library would make the place even more attractive to summer visitors. In Lake Geneva the Herald's response to the Sturgis gift was more enthusiastic about the chance to acquire for the city a large and valuable lake front property. The most elaborate argument of this character came from G. W. Johnston in Kenosha. A public library would lead the people to desire better educated men in city offices, men of a class who would pursue the rightful interests of the people by reducing city expenses. In judicial capacities they would keep court costs as low as possible; as executives they would ensure city employees' closer attention to public duties, resulting in fewer accidents and therefore fewer lawsuits against the city; crime would diminish, and its costs would decrease.[20]

The New Englanders came to Wisconsin with a strong belief that in their homeland democracy had developed very nearly to a state of perfection, and that their migration was simply an extension of this ideal state into other regions. The changes occurring around them heightened awareness of the need to protect their heritage, and they planned instruments for the education of their children so they might ". . . transmit unsullied . . . the excellent institutions which we have received . . . ." Until those instruments were created, however, and for those who could not attend them, there were other means to the same end. The Yankees were men of The Book, and celebrated the power of books to enlighten the people:

> Books, books! Written in the olden times of a man's untrammeled thinking, - - and read, studied, admired and almost ordained by a hundred generations before us.

It was not necessary for there to be many books. The writer just quoted spoke of the fortunate situation of a neighborhood which owned a "little library" of those books which demonstrated the nobility of those men whose acts created nations and whose words instructed them. This pioneer optimism persisted, and in 1871 a Milwaukee Sentinel editor cited a former acquaintance whose reading had been limited to the Bible, Plato and a good weekly newspaper: "His mind was stored with the solid silver of thought . . . . His strong pure heart was a fountain of life to his neighborhood." In

1880 J. P. Haire told the Janesville Round Table that we read to garner wisdom by "sympathetic communion" from the learned and wise of the past. Frank Avery, in 1882 the Chairman of the meeting to organize the Baraboo Library Association, told the gathering that it was their duty to make that wisdom available to all. In 1890 Frank Hutchins praised the Williams gift to the Beaver Dam Library as the means to establish there ". . . a never failing spring of intelligence, virtue and patriotism." Such celebrations of the wisdom of the past may be interpreted as a good-humored litany of a profound but gentle conservatism, which in part they were.[21]

At the same time there was developing among the New Englanders a harsher theme of reaction to the new America which was taking form around them. While the Watertown Democrat told its readers of the power of a few good gooks, Simon W. Smith warned his subscribers: "Look at the masses of poverty, objects of commiseration, and subjects of tyranny who daily are filling up the wilds of the west with sinewy arms, but feeble moral and intellectual faculties." Those latter were the qualities, he said, that must be cultivated before the newcomers could appreciate our republican institutions. The organizers of the Janesville Young Men's Literary Union asked whether they could count on the assistance of wealthy Christian patriots to help make safe those same institutions. In October 1871 the Milwaukee Sentinel advocated a public library there with the argument, in what was already a strongly Germanic city, "The American government and American religion are based on the intelligence of the people." A month later President Robert Hill pleaded for the rescue of the Young Men's Association on the grounds of its close identification with morality and good citizenship. A public library was advocated for Janesville as a manifest necessity to the better interests of the city, especially in view of the industrial society emerging there. Sam S. Fifield, speaking at the dedication of the Vaughn Public Library in Ashland, spoke of it as a fortress which could not be overcome by armies. In 1889 the Wisconsin Rapids Wood County Reporter stated that a public library was necessary to provide the materials with which to inculcate a higher respect for purity, truth and authority. In 1895 S.A.B. of Baraboo wrote an equally conservative advocacy of books; he also wanted a public library staffed with librarians who could,

> ". . . reach out toward the shallow, frivolous, artificial creatures who need good literature administered . . . in minute doses, and sugar coated, at that, for their mental and moral development."[22]

At this time, when public library development in Wisconsin was in the midst of change from a volunteer effort to one led by State appointed professionals, the conservative demand for public libraries had reached a peak. The Baraboo Republic wanted them to work with the schools to indoctrinate the ignorant in patriotism. G. W. Johnston argued that a public library was necessary as a fortress against ignorance, "which is sapping the foundations of our republic." And at the 1896 meeting of the Wisconsin Library Association Frank Hutchins told his audience that our instincts to national preservation and patriotism underlay the demand for public libraries.[23] The lamp beside the golden door was being trimmed down; in the minds of its principal advocates the public library had become an instrument of conservative nationalism.

Chapter 2

Public Library Legislation in Wisconsin

From the beginnings of English settlement on the Atlantic seaboard the American people have demonstrated a growing preference for statute law rather than a common law composed in large part of custom and tradition and always uncertain in application. The demand for the rule of law has resulted in the development of an increasingly elaborate body of statutes. The elaboration occurred within the growing complexity of American society, but as a process of extension of statute law into spheres of social activity which previously had been governed by consensus among the participants. Thus, the instruments of governance for the Library Company of Philadelphia were the regulations agreed to by Benjamin Franklin and his co-proprietors in that venture, without necessity for sanction by a superior authority. Throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century the organizers of library associations relied upon varying forms of written authority for their organizations, but with a tendency toward corporations chartered by the Colonial legislatures. By the end of the century, however, such organizations were sufficiently numerous that legislatures began to create statutes controlling the organization of library associations - - statutes which tended strongly to standardize the associations.

The first was enacted in New York in 1796; in the next twenty-five years six other states, all in New England, enacted their own.[1]

The enactment of the first library association statute was one tangible evidence of a trend which has continued in nearly all sectors of American life, librarianship included. Community action to meet community needs increasingly has come under the regulation of central authorities. During the nineteenth century this centralization occurred largely in the states; in the twentieth century the focus of such activity has shifted toward the Federal government. In many respects it has been a paradoxical development in American life. As centralization and its concomitant, standardization, have been strengthened American society has been embarked on a career of increasing diversification and specialization, especially as a result of immigration, industrialization and urbanization. In any event, at the time Wisconsin was created there was allowed considerable diversity in the establishment and organization of libraries for the public, especially with respect to such matters as communal origins of such libraries and the organizational forms used for them. By the end of the nineteenth century a substantial degree of standardization has been achieved, by the processes of definition and regulation by the State Legislature. In 1900 in Wisconsin there was only one kind of public library.

Wisconsin, as all other States which came into the Union after 1789, began its sovereign existence with the passage of an enabling act by Congress; Wisconsin Territory was created in 1836. It included the present States of Iowa and Minnesota, but soon was reduced to its present boundaries. The Act which created Wisconsin Territory was uneven in its governance. In some provisions, such as for the Territorial Judiciary, the Act was quite specific. In other matters the law was more general, and had the effect of allowing the people of the Territory to work out their own accommodations to situations as they arose, and to create institutions designed to meet their own needs. On still other matters, such as library and other eelymosinary associations, the Enabling Act was silent.[2] There was, of course, the requirement that the laws of the Territory must be "not incompatible" with the Constitution and laws of the United States, but the people of Wisconsin were given general latitude to legislate as their interests dictated. There was a stipulation in the Enabling Act that the existing laws of Michigan Territory (from which the Wisconsin Territory was created) were to apply in Wisconsin, subject to change or repeal by the Governor and Legislative Assembly of the new Territory.

Michigan was on the eve of Statehood in 1836, and many of its laws were in one way or another inappropriate to the Wisconsin situation. Upon assembling for the first time the Government of the new Territory entered immediately into the process of developing its own legal framework, concentrating upon matters closest to the needs of Wisconsin as they were seen by the Governor and Legislative Assembly. But in a number of matters, apparently deemed as less urgent, the statutes of Michigan Territory remained in effect in Wisconsin.[3]

Public libraries were among those less urgent matters. An 1831 Michigan statute, "An Act to Establish and Regulate Social Libraries," was left unchanged.[4] The Michigan social libraries act was permissive in nature; people were allowed to organize their own library associations, and to govern and administer them with a minimum of regulation by the Territory. The specific requirements of the act were few: Seven or more persons within any township or "district" within the Territory could organize an association at a public meeting called for that purpose.[5] At that meeting they could elect the officers specified in the Act - - Moderator, Clerk, Librarian, Collector and Treasurer - - and such other officers as they felt necessary. They could raise money by assessment on the shares in the association, although the Act did not specifically allow the creation of a stock corporation; and make rules for the management of the association, provided they were not in conflict with the laws of the United States or Territory. Several other specific limitations were included in the Act: only those persons "capable of contracting" could form such organizations, which meant adult males. Money raised by assessments on shares could be used for the increase of the library and its preservation. Shareholders were to have only one vote per share. Finally, the association could not accumulate property of value greater than three hundred dollars, exclusive of books.

There is no record that any library associations were organized under the Act, but it remained in effect for three years. During that time it may have come to be recognized that the Michigan Social Libraries Act was an inadequate base upon which to organize an effective public library association. In any case, the next legislation with regard to library associations provided for more substantial organizations. On 30 December 1839 Lorenzo Janes, member of the Territorial Council (the upper house of the Legislative Assembly) from Racine County introduced a "Bill to Incorporate and Regulate Public Libraries." It was enacted within two weeks, although on a procedural vote in the Council it passed only by 6-5 on a roll call.[6]

The new law permitted ten or more persons in any county or town to organize a stock corporation to acquire and operate a public library. (No distinction was made between a "public" and a "social" library.) They were required to subscribe jointly at least fifty dollars for the venture. With the exception of some officers required by the Act - - President, Clerk, Collector and Treasurer - - such a corporation was given nearly total authority to govern itself. However, library corporations organized under this statute could not hold more than three thousand dollars in property, except for the books in the library.

No library associations were organized under Act Number 47 during the nine years it was in effect. It was repealed in 1849 in the following circumstances: In 1848 the Legislature ordered the revision of the Statutes of Wisconsin. The work was carried out by a three man commision created for the purpose. The commission codified and revised the laws previously enacted by the Legislatures of Territory and State, and the Revised Statutes of Wisconsin were then adopted by the 1849 Legislature. Along with many other acts Number 47 was repealed explicity by the Act which adopted the Revised Statutes, Chapter 175 of the Laws of 1849.

Act Number 47 was replaced by Chapter 49 of the Revised Statutes: "Of Libraries and Lyceums." There were a number of substantive changes in the new law. Ten incorporators of a library association were required by the old law. Chapter 49 reduced the number to seven. The joint subscription of fifty dollars was eliminated in Chapter 49. Previously the incorporators could meet and organize under their own aegis; the new law required at least five of them to appeal to a Justice of the Peace for an order directing one of them to call a meeting for the organization of the corporation, and the articles of incorporation had to be recorded by the county Register of Deeds. Act Number 47 specified the principal officers of the association; Chapter 49 permitted the group to create its own structure, but required that the collector and treasurer be bonded. As far as governance of the association would be concerned the two laws were substantially the same in permitting the corporation to do largely as its members wished. The old law limited the corporation to three thousand dollars in real property, but made no mention of personalty. Chapter 49 limited a library corporation to five thousand dollars of real and personal property in addition to the value of its books; a corporation organized as a lyceum could hold six thousand dollars in real and personal property, but there was no mention of books. No explanation for the changes from Act Number 47 to Chapter 49 has been found. From the record it appears that the revisory commission worked with considerable autonomy, with the Legislature's role in the revision limited essentially to acceptance of what the revisors presented to them.[7]

Chapter 49 remained in effect through two revisions of the statutes, until 1878, (as Chapter 68, Revised Statutes of Wisconsin, 1868, and Chapter 68, Revised Statutes of Wisconsin, 1871) when it was repealed and replaced by Chapter 86, Revised Statutes of Wisconsin, 1878: "On the Organization of Corporations." This Chapter became the basic statute for all Wisconsin corporations except those in banking and insurance.

The repeal of Chapter 49 marked the end of any serious legislative interest in the social library as an appropriate model for the organization of public library service in Wisconsin. Indeed, that interest never had been more than slight; from 1836 to 1878 three different statutes had resulted in the creation of no more than a few institutions. The scant attention which the Legislature gave to these laws, and the manner in which this kind of library authorization fell into discard both suggest that the social library may have been regarded as anachronistic since the beginning of Wisconsin's Statehood. While there appears to have been no systematic study of the problem, attempts to provide publicly supported alternatives to the social library began in the Constitutional Convention of 1846.

The Convention began its work in October of that year. It remained in session until mid-December, and proved to be an ill-tempered, quarrelsome group, deficient in discipline and leadership. The Convention was overwhelmingly Democratic, but factions among the majority, organized around both issues and personalities, prevented the appearance of an effective majority. Acrimonious and divisive arguments on just about every issue before the Convention was its primary feature, and the Democrats in nominal superiority seldom were able to unite on anything other than mere opposition to the Whig minority. Three issues before the Convention were of the greatest importance: whether to allow banking in the State, whether to grant a "homestead exemption" from foreclosure for debt, and whether to allow women equal property rights with men. A fourth issue, Negro suffrage, was believed to possess such an explosive potential that the Convention, after extended debate, postponed consideration of the matter until a referendum on it could be held after the Constitution was adopted.[8]

In between the substantive debates and quarrels the work of the Convention went on, performed by committees which prepared the initial drafts of the various articles. One of the committees was that on Education, Schools and School Funds. It had five members: Wallace W. Graham, Chairman, of Milwaukee County; Edward G. Ryan, of Racine County; William M. Dennis, of Dodge County; Garrett M. Fitzgerald, of Milwaukee County; and Jeremiah Drake, of Columbia County. (Ryan, later to become one of the State's outstanding Chief Justices, was one of the few genuine leaders in the Convention, and the author of the Constitution's banking article. His role in this Committee is not fully known.) Only Graham, Ryan and Fitzgerald signed the Report of the Committee.[9]

That document, a draft copy of the Article on Education, was presented to the Convention on 25 November 1846. Its first four sections established a common school system for the State, to be publicly financed, with supervision by a State Superintendent of Public Instruction, to be an elected official. Section 5 provided for public libraries:

> The legislature shall provide for the establishment of libraries, one at least in each town and city, and the money which shall be paid as an equivalent for exemption from military duty and the clear proceeds of all fines assessed in the several counties for any breach of the penal laws shall be exclusively applied to the support of said libraries.

The origins of the first four sections of the Article are difficult to establish. They contain a number of concepts about the organization and funding of schools which were common to several states. The origins of Section 5 can be precisely located, in the 1835 Michigan Constitution. In the Wisconsin Constitutional Convention the Michigan experience of several of the members exerted a substantial influence on the development of the draft Constitution. Many of the ideas contained in it were based on the Michigan charter; indeed, those ideas frequently were put in the same phrases.[10] Article X, Section 4 of that document did contain a provision for public libraries, almost identical to Wisconsin's, except for a phrase which left to the Michigan Legislature to decide when the Section would become effective. No such discretion was allowed the Wisconsin legislature.

On 27 November the Convention began intermittent consideration of the proposed article, and an amended one was adopted on 4 December. Much of the discussion centered around the first four sections. There was a great deal of talk about the values of education in a democracy, but no real debate. The most important discussions were about the desirability of State supervision over the schools, with a secondary concern for the office of State Superintendent. Jeremiah Drake thought the expense of the proposed system was imprudent. Marshall M. Strong (Racine County) emphasized the need for centralized control of the system. John M.

Tweedy (Milwaukee County) said that it must be embedded in the Constitution; experience in Connecticut and Michigan had proven the unreliability of legislatures in these matters. Lorenzo Bevans (Grant County) also argued for constitutional provision of public schools, describing schools without constitutional support as calamitously unfit for the children of free men.[11]

Stoddard Judd of Dodge County opposed the article, with remarks to the effect that no improvement could be made in the American common school system, nor was any necessary. He opposed a State and county superintendents as not adapted to the needs of the State, and described them as so many leeches to absorb the school fund. Judd was also the only delegate to speak on Section 5. He believed that town libraries, supposedly productive of much good, actually were "town nuisances;" that the books merely were taken home and read once or twice by children, and then left on shelves to moulder.

The only response to this outburst came from John Tweedy, who essayed a sarcastic reply, and Judd and Tweedy entertained the Convention for a while with some acid exchanges about each other's political affiliations. This appears to have been the extent of debate on the issue of a constitutional provision for public libraries.[12] The Convention, then sitting as a Committee of the Whole, accepted the amended Report (none of the amendments pertained to Section 5).

Serious efforts to eliminate Section 5 came a few days later. On 3 December William R. Smith (Iowa County) attempted to amend the article by elimination of all of the Section after the word city. The attempt failed. On 5 December David Noggle (Rock County) offered an amendment which would have eliminated the section entirely. His maneuver came on the third reading of the article, and required unanimous consent. Ryan, Judd, and others refused. Noggle then attempted passage of his amendment under suspension of the rules, which required a two-thirds vote of the Convention. This move also failed, and Article IX was then accepted by the Convention, 69-28.[13]

Within another ten days the Convention finished its work, and submitted the proposed charter to the people. Constitutional scholars and lawyers have called it an advanced, even radical document. So it was described also, chiefly by its opponents, during the ratification campaign.[14] It forbade banks of issue within the State; women were granted equal rights in property; and it provided a "homestead exemption" from foreclosure for debt - - forty acres and buildings for a farmer, or one thousand dollars worth of urban property for the city dweller. These provisions, which had caused much of the difficulty in the Convention, were the principal sources of doubt and confusion which led the people of the Territory to reject the Constitution by a vote of approximately 20,000 - 14,000. Article IX was a minor issue in the campaign, and its Section 5 attracted a measure of disapproval.

A number of delegates to the Convention urged rejection of the Constitution, and one of them based his objection partly on Section 5. He spelled it out in a letter to the Platteville Independent American. The proposed method of financing town libraries, he argued, would add $1,500 or $2,000 a year to the taxes to be paid by the people of Grant County. That baneful result would stem from the circumstances in which road construction was performed. Each property owner in the County was required to spend a certain amount of time working on road construction. Most did not, but paid a fine for their failure to work, and the roads were paid for in that way. "Yet every man might pay his fine, and the increase of our library would be the only consequence."[15] His point was sound, for in that rugged area of the Territory, at that time, a county's budget for roads frequently was the major item of expenditure. Whether, in view of the Michigan experience with a similar provision for libraries, his fears would have been borne out, is very uncertain.

The defeat of the 1846 Constitution was little more than a hitch in Wisconsin's progress to Statehood. After some desultory discussion in the Territorial press during the spring and summer of 1847 the Legislature called a new Convention into session in the fall. It was a much more disciplined body than the previous one, and a new charter was drafted with little difficulty. The controversial features of the 1846 document, Section 5 among them, were dropped. After a listless campaign in the new Constitution was ratified in March 1848, by a vote of 16,400 to 6,200. This decrease of nearly one third in the total vote occurred despite a population increase of approximately sixteen percent in the eleven months between the two elections.[16]

In the first twenty years of Statehood the Wisconsin Legislature paid no attention to the subject of tax support for public libraries. The enactlment of public library laws by a number of other states, especially in New England, appears to have had little impact in Wisconsin. Legislative inattention to the matter appears to have coincided closely with public disinterest. A revival of Legislative interest in the subject after the Civil War seems to have been in advance of concern by the people of Wisconsin.

In January 1868 Assemblyman Lewis Benson (Dodge County), introduced a bill to provide for the establishment of Town libraries. It moved easily through the Legislature, and went into effect on 6 March as Chapter 174 of the Laws of 1868. The Act permitted in any town the establishment of a library for its residents, by a majority vote on the question at the annual town meeting. The act specified how the question should be stated on the ballots: "For town library," or "Against town library." Other provisions authorized annual town election of the librarian, with the Town Board empowered to appoint a librarian in the event of a vacancy between meetings; a town appropriation for the library, not to exceed one hundred and fifty dollars annually; and town meeting establishment of regulations for operation and use of the library. The town could require the bonding of the librarian, and could accept or purchase books from any school district in the town.

Obviously the Act envisioned a very limited library for a town; but although there were more than two thousand towns in Wisconsin few libraries were established under the statute. The next revision of the statutes saw Chapter 174 incorporated routinely into Chapter 38 (the basic law of towns) of the Revised Statutes of Wisconsin. It remained in effect beyond the end of the nineteenth century, unchanged and unused.

The town in Wisconsin is a political unit which is subordinate to the county in some matters, but independent in others. Usually it is six miles square, as was the township of the Northwest Ordinance, but there are many fractional towns in Wisconsin. In Wisconsin towns do not exist within incorporated cities and villages. Town libraries, therefore, could not be created within the limits of a city or village. More important to the development of town institutions, however, was the fact that as villages or cities within towns increased in area they did so by annexation of portions of the towns, which thus saw their population and tax bases shrink accordingly. Undoubtedly it was this factor which caused the early demise of the Ashland Town Library. The Library was established in 1876, but much of the Town's population and wealth, including nearly all of those who wanted the town to maintain a library, disappeared into the City of Ashland when it was incorporated in 1887.

The Town Library Act appears to have been a relic of the New England town government which became strongly intrenched in Wisconsin even as it was becoming increasingly inappropriate for the industrial and urbanized State which Wisconsin was becoming. It provided for a public tax supported library, but the political unit in which the library was to be based was the same town which had been envisioned as the proper base for the social libraries authorized by the Michigan Social Libraries Act of 1831. In approving Benson's bill the Legislators simply did not take into account the development of municipalities which had taken place in Wisconsin by 1868. Nor did they recognize the considerable development which the concept of the public library had undergone in the intervening years.

The development of modern public library law in Wisconsin began in 1872, when Assemblyman Alexander Graham (Janesville) introduced the bill which became Section 931 of the Revised Statutes - - still the basic public library law in Wisconsin.[17] His bill authorized the council of each incorporated city in Wisconsin to "establish and maintain a public library and reading room," and to levy a tax of not more than one mill for that purpose. Other sections of the bill provided for the appointment of library directors (trustees) by the mayor with approval of the common council; gave the directors exclusive control over all funds and property of the library, with a proviso that the directors could not enter into a contract for construction, lease or purchase of a building without council approval; specified that not more than one member of the city council could be on the board; vested control of library employees in the board; and stated that use of the library should be "forever free" to the residents of the city. One section of the bill stipulated that a city of more than 75,000 population - - which meant only Milwaukee - - could levy a library tax of only one-half mill. Whether Graham meant to protect or thwart the Milwaukee taxpayer was not recorded.

The progress of the bill to enactment does not appear to have been a routine matter. It was amended to a significant degree, but the record does not disclose the authors of the amendments, nor any reasons for them. One amendment was an enlargement of the bill's scope: incorporated villages also were given authority to establish public libraries. A second important amendment in effect forbade the city of Milwaukee from establishing a public library, by limiting the application of the bill to cities of not more than fifty thousand population. A third significant amendment now seems meaningless: it provided that the directors should be "chosen from the citizens at large with references to their fitness for such office . . ." The phrase was not explained in any way. Other amendments were minor changes in the language of the bill, and not of a substantive nature.[18] From this point Wisconsin library law followed more of a developmental course than had been the case; that is, subsequent public library legislation was enacted, for the most part, with reference to this basic law.[19] In the next twenty-eight years the law was amended seven times.

The first and most significant amendment came in 1876. On 3 February Senator Flint introduced Senate Bill number 121. In a little more than five weeks it was enacted and signed into law as Chapter 295, Laws of 1876. The Act broadened the scope of the Graham Act, by authorizing the establishment of public libraries in towns of more than two thousand population, as well as in cities and villages. This was the substance of the bill introduced by Flint, but the Assembly Committee on Education amended the bill in a way that made the implementation of Section 931 more difficult, by providing that a public library might be established only by vote of the electors within the jurisdiction affected. The law remained thus for seventeen years, and the requirement for a municipal vote on establishment of a library did not prove to be a critical handicap. Eau Claire, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, Janesville, LaCrosse, Madison and Two Rivers established libraries under the act.

On 23 February 1893 Senator Martin introduced a bill which was to cause considerable difficulty by one phrase, especially in Oshkosh, and to a lesser extent in Beloit. That phrase provided that the library tax could not be levied unless approved by a majority of the electors of the municipality affected. The bill languished in the Senate Committee on the Judiciary until 29 March; then, in haste induced by the approaching end of the legislative session, it was enacted and signed into law on 13 April.[20] At Beloit in the fall of 1894 and at Oshkosh in the spring of 1895 library elections were held. In both cities a majority of the votes cast were for the libraries, but a majority of electors did not vote in either election. The City of Beloit ignored the law, and established its library; Oshkosh turned to the Legislature for relief.[21]

The Oshkosh election was held in the first week of April 1895; by then the deadline for the introduction of bills in the 1895 session of the Legislature had passed, so on 9 April there was submitted to the Legislature a resolution authorizing Assemblyman George Buckstaff of Oshkosh to introduce a bill which would repeal the majority of electors clause. The resolution passed both Houses on that same day, and on still the same day Buckstaff introduced his bill. In both the Assembly and the Senate the bill was passed under suspension of the rules, and it was signed into law on 20 April. Armed with this diminution of the law Oshkosh held a successful election on the library, on 24 May 1895.

The Martin Act of 1893 did allow a municipality to establish a public library without a referendum if no tax were levied, and it authorized an alternative method of financing the library. A city council (or town or village board) could appropriate for the library up to ten per cent of the city's annual receipts from liquor license fees. The idea was not new with Martin. The method had been used in 1872 to provide public support for the Library of the Janesville Young Men's Association, but it had been done by amendment of Janesville's city charter, and had remained in effect for only one year.[22]

That part of the Martin Act received no more attention or discussion in the Legislature than did the majority of electors clause, and its existence as law was only two years longer. Its repeal, however, was much less urgent, and required no extrordinary proceedings by the Legislature. On 21 January 1897 Senator James Stout introduced Senate Bill number 32. It amended Section 931 of the Revised Statutes by elimination of the phrase about license fees. This part of his bill passed the Legislature without difficulty.

Stout used the same bill to work a much more significant change in library tax law - - the elimination of the onemill limit in Section 931. This was a more difficult matter. On its introduction the bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Education, of which Stout was Chairman. His Committee colleagues refused to go along with him on the mill rate elimination. On 3 March the Committee reported, with recommendation for passage, an amendment which included the one mill limit. The next day, however, Stout won indefinite postponement of the amendment, and on 8 March the original bill was passed by the Senate. After routine action by the Assembly the bill became law on 20 April. Senator Stout's bill also permitted towns of one thousand population to establish public libraries under Section 931.

The last nineteenth century amendment to Section 931 resulted indirectly from philanthropy. By the last years of the century several cities in Wisconsin had privately endowed public libraries which were administered by private trusts. Ashland, Kenosha, LaCrosse and Menomonie offered the most notable examples, and Senator Stout was a trustee of the Mabel Tainter Memorial Library in Menomonie. The Tainter endowment for the library had been generous (thirty thousand dollars), but it did not offer the stability and developmental promise of a tax based income. Presumably it was for these reasons that Stout introduced Senate Bill number 125 in the 1899 session of the Legislature. By this time he had developed considerable experience in getting library bills passed and this one was accepted without difficulty. It was signed into law less than sixty days after its introduction. Chapter 89 of the Laws of 1899 had only one operating section. It provided that Wisconsin cities could levy a library tax, and authorize their boards of education to spend the library funds in support of "any secular or non-sectarian public library and reading room" free to all residents of those cities.

In 1878 the Graham Act had become Sections 931 - 936 of the Revised Statutes of Wisconsin. Section 931 contained the authority to establish public libraries and provide funds for their operation. Section 932 governed the appointment of directors, their terms of office, replacement and related matters. 933 dealt with the organization of the directors and their governance of the library. 934 contained the "forever free" phrase and authorized the directors to establish rules for the use of the library. 935 required an annual report to the municipal legislature. 936 authorized the library board to accept gifts and bequests.

Up to 1897 Legislative attention had been directed to Section 931. In that year two other sections of the law were amended. Chapter 92, Laws of 1897 amended Section 932 to make city school superintendents and village supervisory principals ex officio members of their respective library boards. Chapter 109 authorized library boards to extend their services to neighboring communities by contracting with the appropriate authorities in those communities. Both acts were routine legislative matters.

The record of public library legislation in nineteenth century Wisconsin leaves unanswered a great many questions about it, and appears to have been largely a matter of legislative tinkering with no larger purpose in mind. Not until Senator Stout appeared on the scene in 1895 was there any legislator in Wisconsin who devoted sustained and thoughtful consideration to the problem of public library development in the State, and his work in the Legislature was influenced by his close relationship with the leaders of the emergent library profession in the State. Yet from the perspective of nearly a century what the Wisconsin Legislature did can be seen clearly: they had created a basic framework for public library service. There was legal authority for making public libraries available to every person in the State. All that was needed was for the law to be put into effect - - a task that is not yet finished.

The development of public library legislation, however, had resulted in the realization of a public library concept which was to some degree more appropriate to the Wisconsin of 1836 than to that of 1900. Establishment of such a library was determined by the electorate of a municipality rather than by the people of a community, because community was defined to include all those who lived within the municipal boundaries, without regard to their diverse background and conditions. The implicit assumption which underlay the public library statutes of Wisconsin was that Marinette and Milwaukee, the Town of Beetown (in Grant County, with an 1895 population of 1,130) and the Town of Wauwautosa (adjacent to the City of Milwaukee, with an 1895 population of 12,173) were substantially similar communities, differing mainly in the numbers of their people. For each of these civil jurisdictions an almost identical library establishment was promulgated. The same kind of library authority with the same set of powers was declared appropriate for every municipality in the State. Sixty-four years of legislation had resulted in institutionalization, with some modification, of an eighteenth century model for library development. As the nineteenth century ended there was in Wisconsin's library laws little recognition of the enormous changes which occurred in the social fabric of the State.[23]

Chapter 3

Library Associations in Wisconsin

The earliest library associations in America were informal organizations in the New England colonies. Their existence has left little trace, but by the early years of the eighteenth century the increasing complexities of New England society made necessary more substantial organizations of every kind, and library associations began to be recorded in the public rolls of that society. They were still relatively uncomplicated associations whose functions were to provide for the joint ownership of books and a place where their owners might meet to exchange books and ideas about their contents.[1] The Library Company of Philadelphia and the Book Company of Durham, Connecticut, organized in 1731 and 1733, both represent the already well-advanced elaboration of such associations.[2] Franklin's Library Company of Philadelphia represents another significant phenomenon as well: the developing migration of New Englanders and their institutions.

From the middle years of the eighteenth century through more than a hundred years the greatest export from New England was her children. Precise numbers are not known, but a great Exodus was under way, called forth by the fiery clouds of Yankee ambitions. Moreover, this Exodus continued through generations. Yankee emigrants settled much of western New York in the last two decades of the eighteenth century, their sons pioneered in Northern Ohio, Indiana and Michigan, and their sons moved to the frontiers of Wisconsin, Iowa and on to the West.[3]

The Yankee surge in Wisconsin began early in the 1830s, after the Black Hawk War resulted in the eradication of the "Indian menace" in the region. Until perhaps the beginning of the Civil War New Englanders and their children were by far the dominant ethnic group in both Territory and State. They brought the institutions of New England with them: town government, congregational churches, privately supported "public academies," liberal arts colleges, and other voluntary associations familiar to them. In Wisconsin they attempted re-creation of the New England communities described by DeToçqueville, with "complete and regular" institutions, sanctioned by time and supported by law. The Yankees' sense of community was a controlling factor in the early development of Wisconsin, and its influence was apparent in the establishment of many public services. Perhaps the most notable example was the change Yankees brought about in local government. At the beginning of the Territorial period the county was the base of local government, but by the time the State was established the New Englanders had made the Town the principal instrument for local government, and the county became in effect an assembly of Towns, with the Chairman of the Town Board of Supervisors, ex officio a member of the County Board. In many other local matters the Yankees in Wisconsin were the arbiters of both form and substance.

As with town government or the public schools in early Wisconsin, so was the library association derived from its New England prototype. There, the "social libraries," as Jeremy Belknap called them, were more than a simple voluntary association of people who contributed money to the purchase of a common collection of books. Rather, the library association was - - or was believed to be - - a potent instrument for pursuing the light of hope.[5] By 1780 more than fifty had been organized in New England. Thus, a half century prior to the establishment of Wisconsin Territory, the institution already was familiar to many New Englanders.

The library associations in Wisconsin simply were a part of the Yankee communities there. In some settlements the associations arrived virtually with the settlers, as in Mygatt's Corners in the Town of Mount Pleasant, Racine County. The Corners was almost entirely a New England settlement, and almost at once on the newcomers' arrival, "a library, and temperance and literary societies were organized."[6] Mygatt's Corners now is only a name from the past (apparently, the place was engulfed in the expansion of Racine), and whether the library association achieved a more formal existence is unknown. It is likely there were dozens of such organizations whose informal existence could not withstand the increasing industrialization and urbanization of Wisconsin. However, as the New Englanders in Wisconsin prospered, and came to want more substantial libraries they found the desired forms in their cultural baggage, and the library associations became more formidable efforts; they remained almost entirely in the grip of Yankees.

Precise data about the members of the associations are not available; the associations did not maintain records adequate to the analysis of their membership. Indeed, as reports of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association and the Joseph Mann Library Association (Two Rivers) make clear, most of the associations did not keep records adequate to an accurate accounting of their financial condition.[7] However, there is a considerable body of information about the officers of the associations, and this information affords useful speculation about the character of membership.

The names of 934 library association officers and directors have been found in records about the associations: 183 in the Milwaukee associations, and 751 in associations elsewhere in the State.[8] Substantial numbers of them were the subjects of biographical sketches in a variety of sources: county histories, regional and municipal histories, newspaper obituaries, and manuscript biographies prepared under the auspices of the Works Projects Administration.

Owing to the diversity of the sources it was not possible to obtain the same information about each of the 934 persons, and in this regard the most remarkable lack of information was sex related. Of the 934 persons 75 were women. For all but a half-dozen of them nothing more than their names is known. Even about those whose husbands were important figures in the State - - industrial and political leaders - - usually it has been impossible to locate any information other than their places of birth, and sometimes their religion. However, the number of women who held office in the associations is misleading about their roles in the associations. Although they constituted nearly eight per cent of the total group the women who were library association officers were concentrated in those associations which were feminine exclusively, or nearly so: the Janesville, Ripon, and Tomah Library Associations. It is noteworthy also that the entry of women into office in the other associations came after the Civil War. In the chartered associations only one woman ever held office: Clara Whitney, elected in 1868 a Director of the Milwaukee South Side Library and Literary Association. (She was born in New York in 1834, educated at the University of Vermont, and was a teacher in Milwaukee.) Finally, except for the feminine asssociations, women were not elected to the offices of president or treasurer; vice president was the highest office women achieved in the other associations.

The library association officers may be characterized in a sentence: they were a male, Yankee elite group. They were predominantly of New England-New York background. Protestant and professional. The occupation which engaged the largest number of them was the law. They were quite active politically - - a disproportionate number of them held elective office. Their educational level was substantially above that of most Wisconsin residents.

The places of birth are known for 443 of the group, 108 (24.4%) were born in New England, chiefly Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. 141 (31.9%) were born in New York State. The Middle Atlantic States (New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and the Distric of Columbia) and the other Great Lakes States (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota and Ohio) were the birthplaces of 31 and 27 persons, respectively (7 and 6%). Two (.4%) were born in other States. Of the non-British foreign-born, nine came from Canada, 23 from Germanic countries, and four from the rest of the world.

There are several noteworthy circumstances about this information. First, natives of Wisconsin never did achieve a majority in association offices, even though after 1885 they were an increasing majority of the State's population. Second, a Yankee plurality was maintained even into the last decade of the century, although from 1850 on their numbers declined in relation to other elements in the population. Finally, the situation in Milwaukee was the most remarkable. Of the 86 Milwaukee library association officers whose birthplaces are known, only five were born in Germanic states. Yet, by 1870 the German-born in Milwaukee were one-third of the city's population. Their proportion in the association offices coincides closely with that in the Milwaukee Young Men's Association, which apparently was never more than about five per cent.[9] Of the Germans in other associations in Wisconsin, most were in the Horicon Library Association, which was exclusively German, and the Germania Society in Milwaukee, a German version of the Young Men's Association.

Library Association officers attained much higher educational levels than the general population of Wisconsin. The educational backgrounds are known for 295 of the association officers; 154 received some college education. The ratio was approximately the same for Milwaukee as for the rest of the State. Of the 63 Milwaukee officers for whom there is educational information, 35 had some college education. Sixty-five of the officers had received only a grade school education. Thirty-two had some high school, and twenty-seven were high school graduates or its equivalent. Forty-nine attended a professional school in addition to college; 42 were college graduates. Six attended a business or commercial school. Eleven received formal education of some other category, such as private tutoring or the public schools of Great Britain.

Occupationally, the elite status of the officers is quite apparent. Of the 482 whose occupations are known, 132 (27.5%) were attorneys. Merchants (71) and manufacturers (47) accounted for another 118 of the group. Bankers were in fourth place, with 41 members. Thirty-nine were journalists, thirty-one were physicians, twenty-seven were educators, twenty-three were in insurance and real estate, 15 were clergymen. Eight were lumbermen, fourteen were farmers; none of the farmers was in Milwaukee organizations, although there were some "gentleman farmers" in those groups. There were twenty-six in other occupations, 13 in Milwaukee and 13 elsewhere in the State. The last category represents a miscellany of occupations: an architect, two building contractors, a Post Office clerk, and several "agents" and "executives" not otherwise identified.

It is apparent that the associations were governed by the commercial and professional classes in the State, but it is noteworthy that in the "other" category the numbers were divided equally between Milwaukee and the rest of the State. In Milwaukee urban industrialization advanced much more rapidly than in the other cities of Wisconsin, and the resultant occupational specialization also was further advanced in Milwaukee. The "other" category accounted for about seven per cent of the entire group, but they were nearly thirteen per cent of the Milwaukee association officers. The distribution of attorneys is a similar indicator. They were nearly thirty-two per cent of the Milwaukee group, but just over twenty-six per cent of the group from the rest of the State.

Information on their religious affiliations was found for 168 of the association officers. It corresponded approximately with their nativity. 128 of them were members of church groups associated with the New England - New York backgrounds of most of the officers. Fifty-six were Congregationalist, thirty-six were Presbyterian, eighteen were Unitarian - Universalist. Twelve were Roman Catholic, and there were eleven Lutherans and eleven Methodists. Four were Baptists. Ten were of other religions, and three professed none. Again, the data tend to demonstrate that the associations were unrepresentative of the general population of Wisconsin. By 1870 the two most numerous religious groups there were Lutherans and Roman Catholics. Together they accounted for a majority of the State's population, but they were represented in only fourteen percent of the associations' officers. Even that figure is misleading. The members of the Roman Catholic Church were concentrated in Milwaukee's South Side Library and Literary Association and Sheboygan's Marquette Library Association.[10]

Political affiliation is known for 269 of the 859 male officers of the associations: seventy-four were Democrats, three were independents, three were "other" and 189 were Republicans. For the Milwaukee group the numbers were fourteen Democrats, one Whig, and forty Republicans. The

Republican Party was over represented, in proportion to the population. Wisconsin was a Democratic State until 1860; and during the forty year hey-day of the Republican Party, the Democrats still maintained about forty per cent of the vote, and won the Governor's office twice. In Milwaukee the Democrats maintained a solid grip on the city, usually with about sixty per cent of the vote, until the 1890s.

The number and range of political offices held by association officers is even more revealing of their status. It is likely that no other group of a non-vocational nature would include so many office holders, and certainly the proportion of association officers who held elective office far exceeded that for the general population. 273 held elective office, forty in Milwaukee and 233 in the rest of the State. One was a United States Senator, six served in the U. S. House of Representatives, three were Governor, two were Lieutenant Governor, two were State Attorney General, three were State Superintendant of Public Instruction, and ninety-six served in the Legislature. Sixty-six were Mayors, thirty-three became judges, thirty-two were District Attorneys, and five were Sheriffs. In addition to these offices two of the group were appointed to Presidential Cabinets, four to the Federal Judiciary, and one was appointed Chief Justice of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Nearly all of these also served on their city councils, town or village boards, and county boards. Many could have been called professional politicians, with political careers that spanned twenty, thirty or more years in a variety of offices. 117 were elected to one office only, 146 were elected to between two and five offices, and ten of them were elected to six or more offices.

The political power represented in this group of 859 men is the most remarkable element of library development in Wisconsin during the nineteenth century. The fact of it has significant implications for historians of the public library movement, yet it is one which so far has been overlooked - - or, perhaps, unsought.[11] The particular significance of this office holding lies in the high number of local offices held. The association officers were members of a class which exerted great influence in local government, a factor which may do much to explain the relative ease with which public libraries were established in the cities of Wisconsin, beginning in the 1870s, and continuing into the early decades of the twentieth century.

Throughout the century the library association was the principal form in which public libraries were organized; before the passage of the Town Library Act in 1868 it was the exclusive form. There were no endowed public libraries before the 1880s. During the entire sixty-four years there were only a dozen or so attempts at the development of public libraries by other organizations: the Unitarian Society of Kenosha, the First Congregational Church of Sheboygan, Women's Clubs in Mineral Point, Token Creek and

Tomah, the W.C.T.U. in Antigo and Evansville, the Ladies' Temperance Union in Janesville, the Business Men's Associations in Fort Atkinson and Sheboygan, the Baraboo Industrial Art Association, and the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers in Altoona. Most of these efforts succeeded only to the extent that their collections became nuclei for the book collections of subsequently organized library associations. The Legislature passed a school library act in 1858, and the libraries authorized by it were intended to be at least semi-public, but the Act never was put to effective use. To an overwhelming degree, the establishment of public libraries was left to associations organized specifically for that purpose.

Counting those established by organizations other than library associations, there were 152 libraries in ninety-eight cities, towns and villages of Wisconsin.[12] Thirty-two municipalities had more than one such organization, though not always at the same time. The largest number in any one municipality was seven, in Fond du Lac. There were five in Racine, four each in Baraboo, Janesville, Manitowoc, Oshkosh and Sparta, three each in Eau Claire, Milwaukee and Sheboygan. Thus, ten cities accounted for forty-one library organizations; the thirty-two places with more than one accounted for eighty-five associations altogether.

In general the associations were organized in the manner of corporations, with elected officers and directors.

Some were subordinate to other organizations, and one, the Ladies' Library Association of Cassville, had as its incorporators two male attorneys, M. L. Sargent and J. A. J. Young, and their "associates and successors." Some associations incorporated under the general statutes which permitted library associations: Act Number 47, Chapter 49, or Chapter 86, whichever was in force at the time. Thirty-seven, however, were organized under Legislative characters, and a sizable number apparently did not incorporate.

Population data about the communities in which the library associations existed offer little support for supposing a relationship between numbers of people and community ability to support a library association.[13] As a sense of community could not develop solely on the basis of numbers, a particular level of community development was not necessary to library organization. The Town of Ashland and the Ashland Library Association were organized almost simultaneously. The Town was organized in mid-July 1872. In the August issues of the Ashland _Press_ the Editor discussed the need for a town library, and the organizational meeting of the Ashland Library Association took place on 28 September 1872. Some communities had library associations before they became organized municipalities: Brandon's Library Association was organized in 1868, and the Village of Brandon did not come into existence until 1881; the Viroqua Library Association was organized in 1866, but the City of Viroqua was not incorporated until 1885.[14] Population decline, when it occurred, was not a deterrent to library association organization. The Platteville Young Men's Library Union was organized in 1868; during the sixties the village of Platteville underwent a serious decline in population. The Cumberland Library Association, which came into being in 1898, also was organized in the face of a strong decline in village population. In view of the strong relationship which most Americans saw between population increase and prosperity, one might assume that the citizens of these communities did not equate the library associations with the entire municipalities, but organized them with referene to proprietary associations. That is, they acted in accordance with their beliefs in their individual abilities to sustain such associations. "Hard times," or "a poor business situation" commonly were used to justify inaction on serious municipal problems, such as the need for water and sewage systems, or for parks, or the improvement of schools.[15] Nevertheless, in each of the places cited there was considerable activity underway on behalf of public libraries. In many other places library associations were being organized almost as soon as the main streets were laid out. Milwaukee still was a frontier settlement in 1838, as was LaCrosse in 1853, Ashland in 1872, and Menomonie in 1874; but the energy and confidence of many of their citizens sustained in them a belief that even in these harsh new settlements they could afford some of the amenities of civilization.

The same two types of association which Shera found in New England also existed in Wisconsin - - the proprietary libraries and the subscription libraries, Both types, however, eventually were succeeded by a third kind - - the simple membership association, that is, an association in which the members tended to meet only on occasions which were established rites of membership, but not essential to the conduct of routine business by the association.

During the century, in Wisconsin and elsewhere, the concept of the corporation underwent a complex course of development. Control of the corporation became increasingly removed from the members and concentrated in the hands of an executive group. In business corporations "ownership" changed radically as the "owners" more and more became mere stockholders who had little voice in the operations of the corporation. By the end of the century the corporation had been granted the status of personality; but, in reality, corporate control was vested in the executive group who in many cases were remote from the owners. In non-business corporations some of the same developments occurred, although not to the same extent. Even so, library associations also tended to become library corporations which were not under operational control by the members. It appears that a number of factors contributed to this development in the library associations. Probably the chief one was the decreasing involvement of the members in the operations of the libraries which occurred as the members themselves underwent a declining sense of community in the associations. Population increase, occupational specialization, and other differentiating processes must have contributed to a declining sense of community in the associations, but their effects cannot be gauged precisely.

When the settlement of Wisconsin began the library association already had been changed from a simple common law corporation to one with statutory authorization, but in the statutes there was considerable confusion about the nature of membership in the associations. At various times both proprietary and subscription associations were authorized, and both kinds were organized. Any associations organized under the Michigan Social Libraries Act would have been joint proprietorships. In Act Number 47 the proprietors became subscribers, but they were described also as stockholders; and together the stockholders became a "body corporate and politic," whereas in the Michigan Social Libraries Act the proprietors merely were a "body politic." In Chapter 49, Revised Statutes of Wisconsin (1849) the subscribers returned to the status of proprietors. The successor to Chapter 49, Chapter 86, Revised Statutes of Wisconsin (1878) was very general in its provisions, with implicit permission for each corporation organized under it to define its own conditions of membership.

Meanwhile, from 1836 to 1872 the Legislature effectively negated whatever purpose it may have had in the passage of general library association statutes. This was accomplished by Legislative charters for specific groups. During this period chartered associations were the predominant kind of library organization, and the charters are the most significant body of evidence about the nature of the library associations. The chartered library associations are difficult to characterize. In form they were corporations, but close examination of the charters reveals that the organizers of the associations and the Legislature were uncertain of their nature and purpose. The charters were far from identical, either in form or content, but they did have two common features: the grant of authority to establish and maintain a library; and a statement giving the association the status of a body corporate and politic, coupled with a statement of the powers of the corporation. Sometimes the grant of powers was explicit, as in the charter for the Pine Knot Literary Club in Wausau, which expressly authorized perpetual succession, "full power" to sue and be sued, to plea and be impleaded, to contract and be contracted with, to acquire, hold and convey property, to have and use a common seal, and to make and alter rules, regulations, and by-laws. Otherwise the grant was implicit, as with the charter of the Brandon Library Association, "by that name to have perpetual succession and have and enjoy all the powers and privileges incident to a corporation." Beyond these features, however, the contents of the charters apparently were limited only by the imaginations of their drafters.

The charters do display the incorporators' fascination with unimportant or irrelevant detail, such as in that of the of the Racine Young Men's Association (1854), which specified the numbers and titles of the officers: a president, two vice presidents, a corresponding secretary, a treasurer, and five managers. Except for the number of officers and the title of manager this charter was not unusual. Many of them, however, contained unique or unusual provisions about matters normally left to the discretion of members. That of the Waterloo Reading Association directed the annual meeting to be held on the first Wednesday of January, during the hours of daylight. Along with that of a Fond du Lac association the Waterloo charter specified that only "discreet" persons might be elected directors. (There was not a similar requirement for the election of presidents, treasurers and other stated officers.) The charter of the Racine Young Men's Association (1868) contained a disclaimer which attempted to forestall adverse judicial decisions in the event of any legal challenge to its existence or functions. That of the Pine Knot Literary Club required that it be located at or within one mile of Wausau. The Waterloo Library and Dramatic Association had the most complex charter, which was concerned with such matters as dues, life memberships, membership conditions and privileges, and amendments to the constitution and by-laws. It came close to making the constitution and by-laws unnecessary.

Many of the charters did contain explicit provisions which potentially were critical to the existence of the associations. One was a restriction upon the manner in which the associations might use the property they acquired; they were forbidden to trade in property except for that which was essential to the purposes for which they were organized. In effect, they were forbidden to own property which would have produced income for the associations. Such restrictions appear to have been aimed at preventing members of the associations from using them for bases from which to conduct some commercial venture, as Alexander Mitchell of Milwaukee had used the Wisconsin Fire and Marine Insurance Association as the base from which to operate an illegal bank of issue.[16] The restrictions are in the charters of the Beloit Mechanics' Library Association, the Young Men's Associations of Madison, Milwaukee, Oshkosh and Racine, the Watertown Young Men's Library Association, the Milwaukee South Side Library and Literary Association, the Jones Library Association of Manitowoc, the Oconomowoc Library Association, and the Waterloo Library and Dramatic Association. They had no practical effect on the associations. None of them ever accumulated sufficient property to constitute a base for a commercial venture, let alone enough to earn an income.

Limits on the amount of property a library association could own were more serious matters, at least in abstract consideration of the problems they presented. Such limits were not a new idea in Wisconsin. They originated in New England, where the following limits were imposed: Maine - - $5,000; Massachusetts - - $5,000; New Hampshire - - $1,000; Rhode Island - - $2,000.[17] In Maryland a different form of limit was imposed, at least on the Mercantile Library Association of Baltimore. Its property holdings were limited to an amount which would produce no more than $5,000 of "clear annual income."[18] In the Middle West the Illinois Social Library Act of 1823 limited library associations to property holdings not in excess of an "annual value of $600." Presumably, this is a limit upon income from property. Wisconsin's first library association statute, the Michigan Social Libraries Act, limited such organizations to three hundred dollars' worth of property, in addition to their books, furniture and other equipment. A limit of $3,000 was imposed in the 1840 Act Number 47. Chapter 49 of the Revised Statutes of 1849 was less restrictive. An association organized under it could accumulate $5,000 in property in addition to the value of books and equipment. The latter two statutes were nullified by the readiness of the Legislature to grant charters with more generous limits. Such limits may have resulted from a general suspicion of extensive accumulations of property in corporate possession. Neither the Legislature nor the members of the chartered associations ever said anything on the matter. Moreover, the Legislature was inconsistent in the imposition of limits. Some library associations had none, and the amounts of others varied greatly. The problem, however, is academic; none of the associations ever accumulated property even close to its limit, nor did any ever have to face the problem of what to do about the rising values of property.

Four of the associations were organized as stock corporations: the Brandon Library Association, the Green Bay Library Association, the New London Library Association, and the Platteville Young Men's Library Association. Their charters authorized stock issues to limits of $10,000; $25,000; $10,000; and "not less than $300 nor more than $25,000" respectively. Only the Platteville charter specified a share value: ten dollars. In each case the charter specified that only stockholders might serve as directors and officers, but that ordinary members might vote in elections for those offices. The charters did not specify the conditions of ordinary membership; indeed, they did not specify the existence of ordinary members - - that was implied in the provision that only shareholders could hold office, but that other members could vote in the elections. The charter of the Platteville Association did contain an attempt to ensure that the shareholder would bear a heavier part of the Association's financial burden than would the non-shareholder. In elaborate detail Section 5 of the charter required the Association's constitution and by-laws to provide for annual assessment against each share, to build a fund for the purchase of books. If the shareholder failed to pay the assessment the Association might sell his shares at public auction. No record of an issue of stock by any of the associations has been found.

Two associations had charter authorization to sell bonds to enable them to meet their objective. The Horicon Library Association could issue an unlimited amount of bonds, and the Waterloo Reading Association could issue five thousand dollars' worth at any given time. The charter of each association limited it to a total of ten thousand dollars in property, which would have served as a practical limit on the bonds it could issue against the property of the Association. Apparently, neither ever issued bonds.

What appears to be the clearest evidence of the ambiguous nature of the chartered associations was the confused status of the property they did accumulate, especially their book collections. When citizens of the State first began to organize library associations, and the Legislature to charter them, the model to which all referred was the joint proprietorship, whose members owned the books in common. Within a few years, however, the proprietary features of the associations began to disappear, and the proprietors became mere members of a corporation. They owned nothing; the books and other property of the associations were vested in corporate personalities. Significantly, none of the charters provided any means for dissolution of the corporations, nor for distribution of their assets in the event of dissolution. The few chartered stock associations apparently never issued stock; thus their membership had no ownership, either.[19] When the Milwaukee Young Men's Association turned its collection over to the City for a public library two acts by the Legislature were required. Chapter 6 of the *Laws of Wisconsin, 1878,* authorized the City to establish a public library and to accept the library of the Association. Chapter 7 *authorized* (my emphasis) the Association to give their library to the City. There was no other legal way for the Association to dispose of its assets. Another chartered organization, the Young Men's Association of Janesville, was bankrupt in the summer of 1882. It became necessary to call a special meeting of the Association in order to find a legal method for going out of existence. If a method was found it is not now known, but the matter appears to have been resolved extra-legally. The library simply was turned over to the newly established Janesville Library Association, and the Young Men's Association ceased to function. The Library Association also agreed, informally, to assume the liabilities of the Young Men's Association.[20] The Madison Institute also merely ceased to function in 1875 when its library was turned over to the newly established Madison Free Library.[21] So far as is known, the charters of the Janesville Young Men's Association and the Madison Institute have never been revoked. Such is the case with other chartered associations whose passing left no trace. For example, in 1854 chartered Young Men's Associations were established in Oshkosh and Watertown. Both failed quickly. In Oshkosh in 1856 and in Watertown in 1857 new associations with the same names received new charters, and the 1854 charters were not revoked. Many such corporate ghosts still may be found in the bookplates of gifts to Wisconsin libraries.

Taxation of library associations' property was another matter in which the Legislature was slow to establish consistent policy. Library associations were not granted a general exemption from taxation until 1887, when they were included in a list of several kinds of non-profit corporations whose real property would be exempt from taxation. In the meantime no library association received a full exemption from taxation. The Racine Young Men's Association charter (1854) contained a statement that its property was subject to tax; presumably both real and personal property were included. The South Side Library and Literary Association was by the terms of its charter exempt from taxation of personal property held by the Association. Most charters made no mention of the subject, which left the issue of taxation to the whims of local assessors and legislatures.

In 1872 the electorate of Wisconsin approved a Constitutional amendment which abolished the practice of granting legislative charters to educational and charitable corporations. It appears that the charters were irrelevant to the development of the organizations created in them, mere relics from the backgrounds of those organizations' founders. The charters, however, were made necessary by the circumstances of social development in Wisconsin.

Associative action to solve community problems or meet community needs was of course a well noted phenomenon of American society. In Wisconsin, law and tradition worked together in apparent conformation with this tendency. Legislative charters for library associations were in harmony with the New England - New York backgrounds of the people who brought civilization to Wisconsin, and who largely guided and controlled the State's development through the nineteenth century, but the circumstances of library association development reveal some contradictions and even dysfunctions in this apparent harmony of law and tradition. For example, Chapter 49 of the Revised Statutes of Wisconsin, 1849, permitted any seven proprietors of a library to incorporate their association. However, Section One of the statute also required the proprietors to call a public meeting for incorporation of the group. Notice of the meeting was to be achieved by an order from a Justice of the Peace posted in two or more public places in the town where the library itself was located. The significance of this requirement lay in the fact that in Wisconsin within the limits of an incorporated city or village there are no towns. Hence, by inference, residents of a city or village could not incorporate a library association.[22] This apparent denial of city residents' right to organize library associations was not changed until enactment of Chapter 86, Revised Statutes of Wisconsin, 1878, which made no reference to town, city or village. In the circumstances that prevailed until then library association organizers who wished to incorporate their association had no recourse but to seek a Legislative charter.

The contradictions in this legal situation could not but have created uncertainty. Its effect can be observed in the record of library development in Ashland. There, the Town of Ashland and the Ashland Library Association were organized in 1872. The Association remained in existence until the spring of 1876. In that year a Town Library was established, to which the Association transferred their collection; the Association then disbanded.[23] Five years later the City of Ashland was chartered, which removed most of the population from the Town of Ashland, and those left in the Town allowed the Library to lapse. Within the new city were most if not all the members of the former Library Association, but no effort was made for its revival. A similar record of uncertainty may be found in the Town of Marinette, 1876 - 1878.[24]

In many places in Wisconsin the establishment of a library association was an uncomplicated matter, with or without the protection of formal authorization. A group of like-minded individuals met and organized their association, and began to operate their library. Considering the informal ease with which many associations came into existence it seems obvious that each was organized within some larger and relatively cohesive group. The nature of such groups was not always explicit, but the organizers and promoters of the associations intended they should transcend their origins and serve an entire municipality. Their expressions on the values and utility of the associations may be interpreted as statements issued in confidence that they represented the larger community. It proved to be an ill founded confidence. Few of the associations survived much beyond their origins, primarily because they did not attract adherents outside the groups in which they were organized.

Nevertheless, an organizational model which was appropriate to the problems of educating and informing Jeremy Belknap's fellow citizens in eighteenth century New Hampshire continued to be employed in Wisconsin long after its usefulness was clearly questionable. From 1836 to 1870 at least fifty-six library associations were organized, thirty-one in the 1860s alone. Only a handful survived in 1870, and most of those were in difficulty. In Waupun, still a Yankee village, the thirteen year old Library

Association flourished, after the fashion of the place. Even so, there is justification for the presumption that without the interest of Edwin Hillyer, Clerk and Librarian of the Association, probably Waupun would have been without a library.[25] In Oshkosh in 1871 the two year old Library Association was foundering for lack of money with which to buy books; it would survive, barely, but owing only to the determination of Adeline and Mary Olcott.[26] In 1870 the Milwaukee Young Men's Association, oldest and richest library association in the State, was well into its decline to oblivion in 1878. Profits from its lecture programs were the mainstay of the library, and they had dropped steadily from an 1865/1866 high of $2,727.60 to $66.72 for 1870/1871. What was not yet apparent to the Directors of the Association, in the spring of 1871, was that their organization was also in the midst of a serious decline in membership, which an inadequate accounting system had so far failed to detect.[27] As the above examples indicate, a surveyor of the prospects for library associations in Wisconsin would have found them bleak. A decade later some historians of Wisconsin's counties did make such a finding, as was the case with the chronicler of the Oconomowoc Library Association. His melancholy sketch is in some respects an epitome of the library associations in Wisconsin:

> A library association at one time existed here, which, it is to be regretted, long since became defunct. It was founded in the winter of 1870, a large number of the prominent, public spirited

> citizens taking part in the movement, and in some instances subscribing liberally to the object. It was hoped and expected that such an institution as a public library, suitably located, where books and periodicals could be obtained merely for the asking, would attract, and thereby benefit a great many who could not, or would not, otherwise obtain good reading; and would also furnish a place for young people to congregate where there would be no bad influences. The intention was good, and the library ought to have prospered, but, like very many good things, it was not properly understood or appreciated . . . . When the interest began to die out, of course the supply of funds died out also, . . . and, finally, in the spring of 1871, after a few spasmodic gasps for life, the Library Association subsided.

The careers of the various associations differed in the details of their spasmodic gasps, but the good intentions and liberal subscriptions of prominent, public spirited citizens proved to be entirely inadequate to the task in all but a few library associations. Even those few eventually failed, and their passing does not seem to have occasioned much more than the above regretful murmurs. The historian of the Oconomowoc Library Association was more mournful than most, but his sorrows were tempered with a closing splash of realism: only a tax supported public library would manage to survive.[28]

This disastrous record did not deter the library-minded citizens of the State. In the last three decades of the century more than twice as many more library associations were established.

During those same years Wisconsin itself was being transformed. An agrarian frontier society evolved into a

State which remained predominantly but decreasingly rural, with an economic organization which was industrial.[29] Concurrently, a technological revolution was occurring at a pace which amazed, and sometimes bewildered, the people of Wisconsin. In 1872 the railroad came to the new Town of Ashland; the Press reported its arrival in a rush of confused ecstasy:

> If [the locomotive whistle] will act as a galvanic battery upon all who have waited in faith for the coming day. It will renew old age and make the young full of energy; it will rebuild old air castles, and no doubt dig pitfalls for the unwary; but for all that, it is the bugle note of Progress, Civilization and Prosperity.[30]

As the society changed the nature and purposes of the library associations began to change. Prior to the Civil War it was enough for a group of people to want to associate together for the purpose of maintaining a library; the simple desire to own a few books in common justified the association. As the society became more complex, and thus the function of a library became more complex, the library associations required broader bases of support; and the manner in which a library was justified began to change. In Milwaukee in 1847 the establishment of the Young Men's Association was greeted with an approval stated in terms of the Association's advantages to young men, and the benefits individuals would derive from membership.[31] Within only five years this attitude began to change, as both the city press and the Association's officers began to argue the

Association's responsibility to provide a library for the city, and its position as a public institution. Elsewhere in the State the Madison Wisconsin State Journal and the Watertown Democrat made similar statements about their library associations' responsibility.[32] During and after the Civil War there came into being a sense of need for greater public responsibility to the associations. At the end of 1861 the Milwaukee Sentinel asserted that all ranks of Milwaukee citizens should support the Young Men's Associations, owing to its "peculiar claims" upon their resources.[33] In 1865 the Library Committee of the Fond du Lac Young Men's Association used the occasion of the arrival of new books to remind their fellow townsmen of their obligations to the Association. After the revival of the Madison Institute in 1866 the Wisconsin State Journal made several such reminders to the residents of Madison. In 1871 the Janesville Gazette put the matter most plainly: "The whole community is interested in this library and the public is merely contributing to its own benefit in patronizing whatever the Association may bring forth."[34]

In these assertions of mutual obligation there was also a strong appeal to the democratic spirit of the people. As early as 1856 Simon Smith in Manitowoc was telling his readers that an effective association must be supported on "the shoulders of the people" to achieve the "stamina" of a flourishing perpetuity. In Wautoma in 1868 the Editor of the Waushara Argus endorsed a library association proposal with the qualification that the ultimate authority for it rested with the people of Wautoma.[35] In other places library associations tried to use the direct democracy familiar to them from their backgrounds. The Baraboo Library Association began to form in 1881, but at a meeting on 30 January 1882 the members deferred action in order to plan a "mass meeting" to organize their group. Subsequently the meeting was scheduled for 13 February, but did not take place owing to inclement weather. The Association's promoters were not discouraged, and kept at their efforts through winter and spring, and announced another meeting for 23 June. The meeting was not well attended, but the members decided to go ahead and organize; subsequently their efforts came to naught.[36] In Beaver Dam the organizers of the Library Association also attempted to use the "mass meeting" as a device to mobilize the community to establish a library. The "mass" did not attend the meeting, but the Association proceeded with its plans for organization. Similarly founded associations came into existence in Sparta in 1861, Menomonie in 1874, and Two Rivers in 1890.[37] Such a democracy was fairly effective in the young communities of pioneer Wisconsin. They were relatively uncomplicated places. In LaCrosse, for example, at the time the Library Company was organized in 1853 the LaCrosse Democrat listed the business and professional establishments and the important social organizations of the village. It was a simple community composed mainly of merchants and artisans and a few professional men, with a population of 543.[38]

The cities and villages of Wisconsin were changing rapidly, however; and at almost the same time that the Editor of the Waushara Argus was reminding his Yankee community of their obligations to one another the organizers of the Superior Library Association were attempting to reach a resource unfamiliar to them: absentee landlords who controlled much of the wealth in that region.[39] At many other places in the State there were at work factors which resulted in widely variant courses of development away from the simple communities of the pioneer stage. Industrialization and occupational specialization would promote subtle but significant changes in the relationships between neighbors.[40] Immigration would result in a high degree of ethnic differentiation between groups. Urbanization would compel the development of different forms of political organization.[41] One result from these factors would be a marked shift in the concept of community, which would come to be defined in relation to place rather than group. The "community" to which Charles Pratt referred in his address to the Ashland Library Association was substantially the same kind of community to which Jeremy Belknap had referred a century earlier. Even at the time of Pratt's address, however, Ashland was commencing to undergo dramatic changes in its composition, and the kind of community Charles Pratt knew in 1872 did not last much longer. The Ashland Library Association did not outlast that community.

As the cities and villages of Wisconsin became more complex municipalities the establishment of library associations in them became ever more complex affairs, requiring greater effort for the mobilization of adequate resources. Working with guidance only from their own imaginations the organizers of library associations made a variety of responses to their local situations. In 1872 the members of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association suggested the canvass of the entire city as the most appropriate method of seeking relief from their financial plight. The population of Milwaukee already was over seventy thousand, so the plan was reduced to one for the canvass of the wealthy men of the city, in search of a thirty thousand dollar endowment fund. The effort failed.[42] In other places the city-wide canvass was used until the end of the century, and probably beyond. It was attempted in Baraboo in 1882, where the canvassers were unable to attract two hundred members from a total population of approximately 4,600.[43] In Janesville in 1883 the ladies of the Janesville Library Association planned a canvass of the city for "subscriptions" to the Association, but the timely intervention of Colonel Burr Robbins turned the canvass into a sale of tickets for the benefit performance by the Colonel's circus.[44] In Two Rivers in 1890 (population: 2,870) a canvass of the city by the Library Association brought in the sum of $2,200 from 306 "subscribers."[45]

Another source of support to which library organizers turned was the remnant of the lyceum movement. Few Lyceums were organized in Wisconsin - - the Milwaukee Lyceum, founded in 1838 and defunct a few years later, was the State's most noteworthy example of the type - - but the library associations of the State were invested strongly with the ideals and objectives of the lyceum movement. It provided the impetus for the organization of several library associations, and also some degree of organizational base upon which library association promoters could build.[46] In LaCrosse, after the Civil War, a loosely organized literary society was in existence to no more apparent purpose than the occasional promotion of lectures. During the summer of 1868 some of the young men of the city began to discuss the idea of a library association, and they appointed a committee to ascertain the status of the literary society, and what action it might take in regard to the new association. The committee found that the literary society was demoralized, and had no plans for reorganization. At this point some members of the literary society began to affiliate with the nascent library association. When the LaCrosse Young Men's Library Association organized on 16 November 1868 it met in the rooms of the literary society, and the President of that body announced that its assets would be turned over to the Young Men's Library Association.[47] The origins of the Sheboygan Library Association were in the library founded in 1875 by the pastor of the Congregational Church. Around 1879/1880 it developed into an organization known as the People's Institute. About mid-January of 1880 there occurred a meeting of the Institute which featured a discussion of its future. As a result of this discussion the chairman of the meeting appointed a committee to "take general charge of the Institute's finances." The committee consisted of William Elwell, L. D. Harvey, James H. Mead, and William H. Seaman. What larger purposes the members of the Institute may have had in mind is not known, for it was not heard from again. In November 1880 the Sheboygan Library Association was organized; the Board of Directors included Elwell, Harvey and Mead, and Seaman was the first President of the Association. Subsequently the Congregational Church library was turned over to the Association, and Elwell, Harvey and Mead later served as its presidents.[48]

Another form of organization to which library association organizers turned for support was the equally nascent chambers of commerce, a number of which were formed in Wisconsin's cities during the last third of the century. In Fort Atkinson in 1892/1893 the Business Men's Association was the prime mover in the development of the library association. In the spring of 1890 the Fort Atkinson W.C.T.U.

had begun to organize a library association, and even had persuaded the city electorate to authorize a five hundred dollar appropriation to the library. The City Council, however, refused to appropriate the money, and the association limped along with little funds and few books. In the winter of 1891/1892 the Business Men's Association began to form. Its organization was completed on 1 March 1892, and from its inception the Business Men's Association promoted the cause of the Library Association; one of its first standing committees was the Committee on the Library. The B.M.A.'s first substantive support for the Library Association was to give quarters to the library within its own rooms. Subsequently the Business Men's Association led the move to have the City of Fort Atkinson establish a public library. In other places such relationships were far less explicit, but in Beaver Dam and Two Rivers the library associations numbered among their principal organizers several if not most of the same men who organized the business men's associations there.[49]

In the last decade of the century the organizing effort became still more complex, although by now the library association movement was changing rapidly.[50] The associati-ations no longer were regarded as ends, but as a means to a public library, so much so that in such diverse places as Kenosha in 1895 (population: 17,548) and Reedsburg in 1898 (population: 2,116) the associations were named Public

Library Association. In Reedsburg the circumstances in which the Association was organized demonstrated the changing conditions of the movement. The organizers of the Association invited Lutie Stearns of the Free Library Commission to appear and speak in assistance to them. After she addressed a "large and representative audience" a committee was at once appointed to carry out the work. In what was an even more unusual development, the committee was enlarged subsequently to include the English speaking clergy of the city, Mrs. A. L. Harris and Patrick Daly.[51]

The changes in the association movement were most pronounced, however, in the large cities such as Kenosha. There, during the years 1850 - 1890 several libraries or reading rooms had been established, but none had achieved a significant level of development. There was in 1895 a Unitarian Society library, supposedly public, but the Society was moribund, and the books were unavailable. When G. W. Johnston arrived in Kenosha in the fall of 1894, to assume an editorship on the Evening News, no library was available to the city, and he decided to make the establishment of one a primary objective. He assumed a leadership in the matter, but with a program of careful preparation for the project, which included considerable effort devoted to avoiding a charge of an outsider's interference in Kenosha affairs. It is apparent that this preparation included getting private assurances of support from the other newspapers in Kenosha, the Telegraph-Courier and the Union, as well as expressions of interest and support from a number of business men and other prominent individuals in the city. The library campaign began in October 1895, attained an early and well-coordinated momentum, and moved smoothly to a successful conclusion in a little over two months. In what obviously was a concerted effort the three newspapers loosed a blizzard of news items, editorials and progress reports about the Kenosha Public Library Association, the benefits of public libraries, Kenosha's need for one, and various methods by which it might be established. During this time Johnston made a determined effort to give the campaign the appearance of resulting from an outburst of popular enthusiasm, and the other two papers followed the Evening News' lead. On 14 November a temporary organization was created, and a committee was established to prepare articles of incorporation. The Articles were signed and filed on 20 December, and on 6 January 1896 the permanent organization was established, officers were elected, and the Association began preparations for the opening of the library.[52]

The power of this example won quick recognition from others interested in public libraries for the State. Within two months of the final organization of the Kenosha P. L. A. Johnston appeared before the Wisconsin Library Association to instruct them in his method. His address to the Association, "A Library History," was a comprehensive, discursive recounting of the Kenosha campaign, with two principal lessons for library promoters. He emphasized the need for a trained advertising writer: "The newspaper is a tool in his hands, and . . . he is a mighty reaper of harvests." Johnston also advised library advocates to seek sympathizers in "every faction" of the city - - an implicit recognition that the simple "communities" of yesterday had been replaced by urban conglomerates.[53]

In Wisconsin the library profession was now in existence, and its members were beginning to lead the public library movement. The era of the library association was not yet ended, and groups of interested citizens would continue to give important service in the development of public libraries; but in this young industrial State the role of such groups was now seen to be only a supportive one in the establishment of public libraries.

Chapter 4

Program and Library Activities of The Wisconsin Library Associations

In Wisconsin the library association movement and the lyceum movement overlapped in time, and there were strong similarities in the two kinds of organizations; the similarities were so close it is difficult to support firm distinction between the lyceum and the library association. One feature of the lyceum came to be the dominant purpose of the library associations: the operation of public libraries. The Milwaukee Lyceum, for example, was organized as an adult education institution, to promote "the advancement and general diffusion of useful knowledge" by any appropriate means, and its library was a means rather than an end.[1] For the Milwaukee Young Men's Association, however, the principal objective was the establishment and maintenance of a library.[2] In other library associations, in their infancy, their goals and activities closely reflected their lyceum origins. Nearly every young men's or library association chartered by the Legislature stated an educational purpose, frequently in identical or nearly identical terms. Nevertheless, the organization and operation of a library early came to be regarded as the most important function of such associations.

Some library associations began as lyceums or lyceum-like organizations and developed into library associations. The LaCrosse Library Company was one. In the spring of 1853, at the close of its lecture season, the LaCrosse Lyceum began its transformation.[3] The Bayfield Lyceum was established in 1857; eighteen years later the Bayfield Library Association was organized on the remnants of Lyceum.[4] In Milwaukee the South Side Literary Society was established in 1862, in order to achieve "the literary and moral advancement of the people, independent of church, sect or politics." Five years later it underwent reorganization into the South Side Library and Literary Association, the primary objective of which was the operation of a public library for the rapidly developing South Side.[5] A similar development occurred in Sheboygan in the reorganization of the People's Institute. Only one association appears to have taken the opposite path, i.e., the transformation of a library association into a lyceum. The Whitewater Library Association, organized in 1857/1858, was by 1861 referred to as the "Whitewater Lyceum (late Library Association)."[6]

Despite the differing goals and emphases in the library associations characteristics of the lyceum lingered for a long time in their program activities. In the beginning of their development debates and lectures were the primary features of the associations' meetings, with a firm emphasis upon the educational values of their proceedings.

There was also a considerable emphasis upon the involvement of the members, and debates were recognized as more valuable than lectures in this respect. Indeed, the promoters of the associations saw a fountain of benefits rush in from their debates.[7]

The actual debates were of a considerable range of pertinence and quality. Frequently they were about complex and controversial issues of the time: The Milwaukee Young Men's Association sponsored a series of public debates on such issues as Wisconsin's Homestead Exemption Law and land limitation laws, matters then before the Legislature.[8] The Young Men's Association of Janesville debated the problem of divorce, co-education in the colleges, railroad rate regulation, and property rights for married women.[9] Sometimes the associations ventured into the debate of partisan contests, as when the South Side Library and Literary Association took up the question of the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson, and when the Janesville Young Men's Association debated C. C. Washburn's and Matthew H. Carpenter's qualifications for the United States Senate. Also, sometimes, the debates were about abstractions or inanities. The LaCrosse Library Company held two such debates in December 1853:[11]

> Resolved, That Art exhibits a higher degree than nature; and
>
> Resolved, That the conquest of Turkey by Russia would, upon the whole, result in good to mankind.

Whatever their merits the debates were popular program features in the earlier careers of the library associations. It was not until about the time of the Civil War that they came to be generally absent from association programs, and they did not disappear entirely until the last decade of the century.

During the 1850s the associations attempted to maintain balanced programs of lectures and debates. At the time their members were debating the land limitation laws proposed for Wisconsin the Milwaukee Young Men's Association also arranged for a series of speakers upon the subject. In LaCrosse lectures and debates were urged for the Library Company, on the grounds that experts in various subjects could present in an hour or two information that it would take weeks for the members to acquire by their own efforts. In Manitowoc a mixed program was proposed for the Association in order to give all members a chance to participate in its programs.[12]

Still, the popularity of the paid lecturer, especially from the East, increased greatly during the fifties. In part this was a result of railroad construction in the State; access to Wisconsin became progressively easier for the touring lecturers of the East. Also, Wisconsin audiences were eager to hear and see them. Many of the most popular lecturers were New Englanders or New Yorkers; undoubtedly they were a welcome taste of home for their hearers.[13]

Then, too, as the risks and labor of settlement and community establishment eased the city and village people of Wisconsin found themselves with increasing amounts of time which could be spared for diversion of one sort or another. The lecturer also was important as a carrier of ideas, and some saw him as a vital intellectual resource, "as necessary to society as the lawyer, minister or physician."[14]

Library associations were among the few organizations with both resources and desire to provide cultural diversity for the people, and they were often charged with an obligation to organize lecture programs. In the fall of 1853 the Young Men's Association of Milwaukee was hesitant in its preparation for a lecture series during the approaching winter; the lecturers with whom the Association had tentative arrangements would be costly, and failure to meet expenses would be a disaster for the Association. The Daily Wisconsin scolded the Young Men for their trepidation, saying that the program was bound to succeed, and that if Milwaukee were to have lectures there was no time to lose in preparation.[15] In 1854 the Watertown Chronicle carried an article about the need for a reading room in Watertown; the article contained a lengthy digression on the city's need for lectures, and concluded with a statement that the newly organized Young Men's Association was the appropriate body to do something about providing them. Again in Watertown, in the fall of 1856, the Democrat hailed the re-establishment of the Young Men's Association, but also lamented that the revival came too late for the development of a lecture series for the coming winter. In the fall of 1858 the directors of the newly established Waupun Library Association were considering a lecture series, and the Waupun Times encouraged them with a plea to the effect that without the Association's effort the village would have no lecture programs.[16] Even in the midst of the Civil War the Sparta Herald urged Sparta's Young Men's Association to continue its sponsorship of lecture programs. Madison was without lectures during the War, and when the Madison Institute reorganized in 1866 the Wisconsin State Journal rejoiced in the Institute's decision to remedy that deficiency. In Janesville during the early seventies the Gazette persistently lamented the lack of public lectures in the city, and repeatedly urged the Young Men's Association to better fulfill its responsibility to the city in this matter.[17]

In their initial efforts at the provision of lectures the library associations were quite conscious of the lecture's value as an educational instrument, and the nature of the lecture programs they arranged reflected this attitude. The program of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association for 1853/1854 is a fairly representative example. It included such luminaries as Ralph Waldo Emerson, the Reverend Theodore Parker, Horace Greeley, Horace Mann, Bishop Potter of Rhode Island, the Reverend D. Lord of Boston, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. This was so formidable a list the Association felt the need to ask a committee of citizens to guarantee the expenses for the season.[18] When library associations began to sponsor lecture series their principal concern, aside from the quality of the lectures, was whether the lectures could be supported through paid attendance. For example, in 1850 the Directors of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association took some care to explain that they had established a schedule of admission prices which would pay for the lectures but would not be a source of profit to anyone, even the Association.[19] They did not long hold to this attitude. Awareness of their position as trustees for a public institution began to lead them to see the lecture programs in a different light, as a source of profit for the increase of the library, and thus the greater profit to the public at large.[20] In Watertown in 1856, D. W. Ballou, Editor and Publisher of the Democrat and one of the members of the defunct Young Men's Association, urged its revival in order to provide a public library for the place, arguing that a more numerous and wealthier population now gave the young men the resources upon which to build such an institution.[21] In Madison the Wisconsin State Journal congratulated the organizers of the Madison Institute for their plan to support a public library, and urged general participation in the organization. By the outbreak of the Civil War the Milwaukee Sentinel was arguing a public responsibility to the Young Men's Association, because it maintained a public library which extended beyond the ranks of the young men. Elsewhere in the State association leaders began to urge their libraries' claims upon public support beyond that expected from members.[22] After the War in Madison support for the revival of the Institute was presented as one of the criteria of good citizenship; and in 1871 the Janesville Gazette urged general support of the Young Men's Association programs simply as a matter of general benefits deriving from the Association Library.[23]

The solid establishment of the idea that the principal function of the associations was the operation of a public library effected a distinct change in the program activities of those organizations. The educational values of their programs became subordinate to the need to ensure a firm basis for the support of the libraries, and entertainment values came to be as important as the educational ones. As early as 1855 the Milwaukee Daily News projected this change, in a column advocating a full house for Bayard Taylor's lecture, "The Philosophy of Travel." It would be a "captivating lecture," with little useful information, but "crowded full of passing interest." In Milwaukee, where newspaper promotion of lectures amounted to a form of subsidy to the Young Men's Association, the emphasis on entertainment came to be almost the sole criterion on which the pleas for public support were based. Even a series of free lectures on applied chemistry were described as "entertainment," although presented by the Association as part of its efforts "to inspire a taste for knowledge of whatever kind."[24] The Young Men's Associations never gave up altogether their educational aspirations, but these did clearly come to have only a relative value in their program. What did decline was the associations' interest in generalized adult education programs, the kind the lyceum movement was meant to support. In Milwaukee this decline became a matter for press comment. The Sentinel in the summer of 1866 saluted the South Side Literary Association as the "only one of a high character in the city." A few months later the Milwaukee Daily News praised the city for the number and quality of its literary associations, but did not mention the Young Men's Association as one of them.

The popularity of lectures increased greatly in Wisconsin during the 1850s and 1860s, but only in Milwaukee did they become a reliable source of income with which to build libraries. Yet it was not until 1861 that the Young Men's Association there reported it has been able to use its lecture profits solely for the increase of the library.[25] It was during the Civil War and the immediate post-War years that the Association gained its greatest profits from lectures: they increased from $735.07 in 1862/1863 to $2,727.60 in 1865/1866. In the years following profits dropped drastically each year to a low of $66.72 for 1870/1871. During

1871-1873 the Association did not sponsor lectures. They resumed in the fall of 1873, and for two years profits hovered around one thousand dollars per season, then began another precipitous decline to a low of $200.70 for 1876/1877, the last year of the Association's existence.[26] In other localities the earnings of the library associations' lecture programs were substantially less. The Fond du Lac Young Men's Association reported a net profit of $530 for its 1865/1866 season. The next year the Madison Institute reported a profit of $351.80. For 1871/1872 the West Eau Claire Library Association earned a net of three hundred dollars. In the fall of 1882 the Janesville Young Men's Association, as part of its efforts to prevent public sale of its library, promoted a series of three lectures on Egypt by Professor William H. Hoisington. The admission price was twenty-five cents per lecture, or sixty cents for all three. The gross receipts for the series were thirty-eight dollars, and the Association netted fifteen dollars. By this time library associations all over the State had given up lectures as a source of regular income; at times one of them tentatively planned a series, but that was the extent of such activity. When the Kenosha Public Library Association came into existence in 1895 its leadership did not even consider lectures as a prospective source of revenue.[28]

Many factors contributed to the discard of the lecture system as a source of regular income, and most of them were beyond the abilities of the library associations to alter or adapt them. Nor does it appear that the associations had any real attachment to lectures. Their members were willing to try any program activity which seemed to promise a profit; as a result there developed a considerable diversity in their offerings. In this progress of diversification the emphasis upon education declined even further. This development began even while lecturers were still crowding the halls of the associations.[28]

The Madison Institute was dormant during the Civil War, and its reorganization took place in the spring of 1866. An immediate need was for money for new books; the goal was a one thousand dollar book fund. Through solicitation the Institute was able to raise only four hundred dollars, so the Directors cast about for other effective fund raising devices. Early in June they began to plan a "strawberry festival." They secured the assistance of a committee of ladies, and permission to use the Assembly Chamber in the State Capitol. Admission prices were set at fifty cents per person or one dollar for a "gentleman and two ladies." The Directors took some pains to assure the public there would be plenty of strawberries for all comers. Nearly one thousand people attended, and the net to the Institute was $289.30.[29] In June 1867 the Milwaukee Young Men's Association held a similar event, much more ambitiously conceived. Committees of ladies from nine churches were appointed to conduct the festival.[30] Menomine's Library Association held a strawberry festival in July 1874, one which netted between forty-five and fifty dollars. The Tonah Library Association sponsored a variety of festivals, balls and "sociables" during 1881/1882, including a "mush and milk festival;" there was a financial report for only one of these events. A ball in March 1882 earned gross receipts of $54.60, of which the Association netted $35.16, to be used at once for new books. In Eau Claire the Citizens' Library Association formed a dramatic club which gave public performances, the proceeds from which were used to support the lecture programs of the Association.[31]

There was a great deal of miscellaneous activity of the sort described above, intermittently engaged in by most library associations. A catalog of these events would be of little use.[32] However, in four communities the library associations did made significant efforts to develop and maintain programs of more serious purpose. The Young Men's Association of Milwaukee sustained its lecture programs over most of a twenty-seven year span. Although the desire to educate audiences became subordinate to that of entertaining them, it continued to be an important factor in the planning of programs for each season. The other three communities were Janesville, Neenah and Sheboygan. Their program cannot be given an adequate general characterization; they are described separately below.

The Neenah Library Association. Organization of the Neenah Library Association began in March 1881, and was not completed until September 1883. Despite this long delay the members were busy in behalf of their Association, although a number of them apparently were diverted for a while in the activities of a literary society called the Neenah Reading Association.[33] A Library Association program committee planned a conventional lecture course for the winter of 1881/1882, to consist of six "entertainments" arranged through a booking agency. The series was to cost five hundred dollars, and the program committee to solicit a fund for the purpose. Apparently the Association was unsuccessful in this for the series was not presented. Instead, the members limited themselves to a winter of social events in their homes. In the spring of 1882 the Association took on a new vigor. Beginning early in April it presented a short series of programs which included a mix of lectures, recitations, and vocal and instrumental music, all by members. The lectures, "The Crusades," by J. R. Barnett, "Reading," by the Reverend J. E. Chapin, and "The Rise and Progress of Literary Associations," by J. N. Stone (Editor of the Island City Times) were received as creditable intellectual efforts.[34]

The Association was dormant during the summer of 1882, and meetings during the early fall were devoted primarily to organizational matters. On 5 December a lecture committee was created, with the apparent purpose of attempting another promotion of a course of lectures. Their work came to naught with the exception of a concert in January 1883, which earned little more than enough to pay expenses. During the remainder of the winter and the spring of 1883 the Association again concerned itself largely with organizational matters, and offered only two literary programs. One featured a paper by Robert Shiells, president of a local bank, "Successors to the House of Stuart;" and the final meeting of the year was given over to "War Reminiscenses."[35] The Association did plan for an active summer: "festivals, lawn fetes, picnics, etc.," and it was later reported that over one thousand dollars had been raised in these activities.[36]

Confident now of success in its effort the Association planned an ambitious program for the coming winter. As the library was prepared for opening the members also planned a four month program of twenty lectures in English history from the end of the Tudor Monarchy. The persons who prepared and delivered these papers included, among others, a banker, John Shiells; a pharmacist, J. M. Pleasants; a paper manufacturer, John A. Kimberly; a high school principal, A. F. Rote; and a newspaper editor, John N. Stone. All things considered, it was a remarkably ambitious attempt. Newspaper reports of the meetings make it clear there was a substantial variation in the quality of the papers; they have been lost, and little more can be said of them. These programs, however, were the intellectual content of the Association's efforts, and they were an important part of its existence. They demonstrated what the Association could do for itself and the community, in entertainment and education: "There is talent of a high order to be enlisted and awakened and stimulated."[37] The Neenah Library Association never again attempted such an elaborate program. During 1884 its library became the Neenah Public Library, and although the Association lingered on for some time, the achievement of its primary objective seems to have deprived the Association of a critical element in its morale.

Such programs do not appear to have been seen as an instrument for the direct attraction of funds with which to effect the Association's principal objective, the establishment of a free public library in Neenah. For raising money the Association relied upon the resources of its members, and the contribution or admission fees of those who attended its "festivals, lawn fetes, picnics, etc." Also the Association was able to enlist for the benefit of the library fund voluntary performances by such groups as the Neenah Quintette Orchestra and the Amateurs, a local dramatic group. In its own terms, however, the Association was a success; it was able to open, operate, and turn over to the City a going public library.

The Janesville Young Men's Association. This group had less happy results from its program activities. For a half dozen years after its organization the Association eked out a marginal development on dues and receipts from its lecture programs. By 1871 it had arrived at the realization that lectures were an inadequate base for the development of a library. Late that year it turned to concerts by the Opera House Orchestra and "other eminent home talent" seeking "to get the people together, please them with some good music," and tell them about the Association and its purposes. Admission cost ten cents (twenty for a reserved seat), and the first concert was successful enough to persuade the Association (and the Opera House management and Orchestra) to continue.[39] Even at those low prices the Association cleared about fifty dollars, and the audience seemed entirely pleased with the program. Four more of the "dime concerts," as they came to be called, were offered, and the Association's profits rose steadily: eighty dollars from the third in January 1872, ninety-six from the fourth in February, and $100.50 from the fifth in March.[40] Despite the apparent success the Association did not continue with the concert program. In the spring of 1872 the Janesville City Charter was amended to give a measure of public support to the Young Men's Association.[41] This may well have been considered sufficient reason for the Association to give up its fund raising efforts. The support, however, was controversial, and was withdrawn a year later; and the Association was somewhat demoralized for several years. In the late 1870s it appeared to be on the path to revitalization, but the effort could not be sustained, and the Association began its final decline into bankruptcy in 1882.

Its library became the property of the Janesville Library Association, whose principal objective was the establishment of a free public library, but it was faced with the more immediate necessity to raise approximately eight hundred dollars in order to settle creditors' claims against the Y.M.A. library, and to put the library back into use.[42] To raise this sum the Library Association did not develop a program of its own; it turned to other organizations or groups who acted on the Association's behalf. "Some thirty of the young ladies and gentlemen" of Janesville put on a benefit performance of Faust, and earned $107.50 for the library. A local music class gave two performances of children's operettas; for these events a local orchestra also donated their services, and the owner of the Opera House gave free use of the theater. The proprietors of the Bower City Roller Rink sponsored a benefit for the Library Association.[43] For the Janesville Library Association the outstanding event in this series was the benefit performance by Colonel Robbins' Circus. Without his intervention the library of the Young Men's Association may well have been lost to the city, and saving the Y.M.A. library was a principal objective of the Janesville Library Association.

The Sheboygan Library Association. The Association began its career with a lyceum orientation firmly established, owing to its derivation from the People's Institute. Early in the Association's existence the members began to improve on their experience with the Institute. In mid-February 1881 the Committee on Entertainments announced a series of papers in American History, on the question: "How the government of this nation came to be Republican, and why this Republicanism assumed the special form it did." The Committee explained that the papers necessarily would be somewhat brief, and that other exercises would be held in connection with each paper; it was hoped that this combination of instruction and entertainment would prove to be attractive to the public. The programs were to be open, and no admission fee would be charged.[44]

The program attracted good audiences, and when the history series ended in April 1881 the Association extended its program year; in response to requests one of the history papers was presented a second time, and a new paper in the series was given. There was also a miscellany of papers on other subjects. One was by a Mr. Peat, "Cooperation as a remedy for the discontent of labor." In it the Sheboygan Herald saw a merit and an importance that reached to all in Sheboygan, and ran a synopsis of nearly one thousand words.[45] A week later the Herald asked for the continuation of the program through the summer, on grounds of their popularity and their value as both entertainment and instruction. The popularity of the programs was unquestionable: the reports of the Sheboygan Times referred repeatedly to a "a full house," "a crowded house . . . even standing room being difficult to obtain," and a room "literally packed full, as scores stood in the doorway, in the hall leading to it, and back to the landing of the stairway."[46]

During the summer of 1881 the Association turned to other programs, principally to raise runds. One, a benefit concert at Turner Hall, was acclaimed as both an esthetic and a financial success. Another was an "elocutionary entertainment" by Mrs. Adelaide Gibbons of Chicago, a professional entertainer on the lecture circuit. Attendance was good, but the Association was disappointed in the earnings, having made its plans with reference to the numbers of people they had drawn to the spring programs.[47]

The Association appears to have used the fall of 1881 as a breathing spell and a time in which to plan another series of winter and spring programs. Early in December it was contemplating the announcement of such a series. Also under consideration was an admission charge of five cents to cover the expenses of the meetings, and begin a fund for the purchase of a piano. Their contemplation was careful, indeed, for late in January 1882 the Times felt compelled to call for action in the matter. A week later the Times was pleased to announce the call had been heeded, and the programs would commence the following week.[48]

For the second series the format was changed from that of 1880/1881. Rather than several papers on the various facets of a single topic the Association presented a miscellaneous series of papers; for each program there were also instrumental and vocal music, recitations and readings. Additionally, there was a series of programs about current problems in Sheboygan and Wisconsin. A paper by Association President Seaman, "A case of law versus physic," related to the public health laws of State and City. It was followed by a local physician's paper on "sanitary reform." And there were programs of the more traditional literary nature, such as the Longfellow Evening, late in April. Public interest in the programs remained at a high level. The early programs in the series continued to result in a packed auditorium; and the Longfellow Evening, presented after the Association's quarters had been enlarged and remodelled, drew an audience of nearly four hundred persons. During this season the Association's programs were diversified further. A stage and accessories were added to the hall, which was a surprise for the audience at the 6 June event, as was the presentation by a local theatrical group of Rodwell's "More blunders than one." Net receipts from the performance were thirty-four dollars, from admission charges of ten and fifteen cents. The stage filled a want long felt by the Association, which believed it necessary to be able to present dramatic performances in order to sustain public interest in the Association's offerings. A minstrel show by the members of a local young women's club completed the program series for the spring of 1882.[49]

Up to this point the Association had carried out a balanced and apparently well executed and successful program of education and entertainment, and it had been done largely on the resources of the Association itself. However, very little money had been raised. In the fall of 1882 the Association began to prepare a different sort of program series. The available records are not explicit on the matter, but the Association appears to have been dealing with a lyceum bureau or booking agency, for the intention to "secure a course of first-class entertainments" was announced, one which would include performances by the Litta Operatic Company and the Hungarian violinist Eduard Remenyi. To present this series the Association apparently was required to guarantee the agency at least five hundred dollars, for a soliciting committee was attempting to sell at least two hundred season tickets at $2.50 each. They sought these sales among the business men of Sheboygan, and by the time an announcement appeared in the press pledges had been secured for 150 tickets, but the minimum was not met, and nothing more was published about the proposal.[50]

At the same time some significant changes were taking place within the Association, although their nature is unclear. At the annual meeting on 6 October 1882 the newly elected Executive Committee announced the names of the members of the Committee on Entertainment, and also of an ad hoc committee on season ticket sales. At a Director's meeting about ten days later a new entertainment committee was appointed, with a statement that the new committee was to prepare programs for the next two meetings of the Association. Later, another new entertainment committee was appointed for the February 1883 meetings, and there may have been others in the interim.[51]

In the same issues in which they announced the proposed series of six "first-class entertainments" the Herald and the Times carried a Directors' statement that the Association intended to continue the popular and low-priced programs of the previous season. Four such programs were presented during the winter, but there seems to have been a significant decline in their quality. To judge from newspaper reports the papers were hortatory and platiudinous. They were: "On what the Library Association is doing and can do for the boys and young men;" a paper "addressed to boys and young men;" "Books and how to read them;" and an extemporaneous discussion of the probable existence of Atlantis.[52] It appears that the events continued to draw large audiences, but after the last one in February 1883 the Association lapsed into inactivity until the time of the next annual meeting.

The report of the annual meeting contained no concern about the program activities of the Association; indeed, the meeting seems to have been a fairly cut-and-dried affair. In December the Association announced a "new scheme of entertainments:" a dance and a literary program in alternate weeks throughout the winter. The Association's intentions proved better than its performance. Several programs were postponed, which in effect was cancellation. Postponements were made for such reasons as cold weather and an Odd Fellows' "social."[53]

From about this time the fortunes of the Association began to reverse. Attendance at the meetings declined during the winter, and the program of 2 April 1884 was something of a disaster. The audiences were so few the Association President expressed regret "very feelingly." The paper of the evening, a survey of ancient literature, was described as excellent but too scholarly, and the performers for the balance of the program did not appear, Some impromptu volunteers were unable to salvage the affair. For nearly a year the Association was unable to do more than keep the library open. In the spring of 1885 it underwent reorganization, and other organizations or groups held a series of programs for the benefit of the Association. These brought in enough money to pay its debts, the greatest of which was three hundred dollars for the piano, and leave a balance of $20.82. The Sheboygan press was optimistic about the Association's future; actually, it was defunct.[54]

The progress of program development in the Wisconsin library association illustrates the course of development in the associations themselves. The earliest associations, such as that at Mygatt's Corners, were justified simply in terms of their existence. Very soon, however, the library associations began to assume many of the characteristics of the lyceum, and to engage in more or less explicit educational activities. Probably the library promoters took this course because it was an absolute necessity for them to find a method of financing the increase of their libraries, and the development of educational programs on the library base appeared to them a reasonable way of garnering such support. For a while the concept showed signs of successful realization.

At the same time, however, the people of Wisconsin were systematizing educational programs in schools at all levels, and the "knowledge explosion" was an already developing phenomenon. These two trends at once complicated the efforts of the library promoters. The formalization of of education in the schools reduced the credibility of such educational programs as the library associations could mount; and the increase in number and variety of books and other media demanded even larger amounts of money for the libraries. In this situation the library association leaders felt an increasing need to enhance the popularity of their programs, and entertainment values came to equal or exceed the weight of educational values. A third trend in American life also worked to negate the efforts of library association promoters: the opportunities for entertainment, or for casual education, also were increasing as both commercial and social organizations entered the field in increasing numbers. Thus it came about that by the end of the century the organizers of library associations largely ceased their efforts to provide either kind of program in their communities. Library associations began to be organized with reference to the values presumed to be inherent in the libraries themselves, and the establishment of the associations began to be regarded only as the first step toward the establishment of municipal public libraries.

To some extent the activities sponsored by the library associations were carried on with reference to values inherent in those activities, but in the main the avowed purpose of the "entertainments," "fairs," "festivals," "lecture courses," and "sociables" was to earn money for the establishment and maintenance of public libraries. The phrase "public library" now has a fairly definite meaning. In the Wisconsin of the nineteenth century, as throughout the United States, that meaning was in the process of development. The concepts currently associated with the institution we call the public library were neither understood nor wanted by the people who organized the library associations - - until very nearly the end of the century. Even then the acceptance of that web of ideas was not yet certain.

Both parts of the phrase underwent change. When the State of Wisconsin came into existence "public" seemed to mean an association of individuals into which entry was relatively open without regard to any particular criteria for membership, such as doctrine, ethnicity, or creed. In that sense dramatic clubs, literary societies, library associations and musical societies were public, as were fire companies, hospital associations and military companies. Obversely, churches, patriotic organizations and political parties were private. Schools maintained and regulated by the State were the first institutions to become public in the modern sense of the word, but by the end of the century fire departments, hospitals, military companies and police departments were, or were coming to be, public in the same sense of the word. In Wisconsin law that sense of a public library was established in 1872, but in actual practice such usage did not become general until after the turn of the century. As late as 1904 public funds were being appropriated to "free libraries" controlled by privately established boards in LaCrosse, Mosinee and Wausaukee.[55]

"Library" was a much more uncertain word during the nineteenth century; it could be and was applied to almost any collection or group of books. As late as 1893 the

Oconomoc Library Association began its existence with "some books."[56] The incremental concepts now associated with a public library - - a specialized building, organized collection, professional staff, specialized services, etc. - - were added slowly. Generally they were unfamiliar to the citizens who organized the library associations. In fact the organizers of the associations were hard put to define their organizations or to state clearly the goals they hoped to attain through their associations. The purposes for which the chartered associations were organized have already been mentioned; the other associations were equally imprecise in their statements on the nature and utility of libraries. In one noteworthy exception James Bardon, Secretary of the Superior Library Association, called it "an organization for the diffusion of information upon topics of general interest."[57] Library association protagonists felt little need to tell the public what a library was. They did feel, however, a considerable need to explain a library functions and advantages for the community. In this explanation argument based on the merits or advantages of a public library almost never was used, except in general or abstract terms. Rather, extravagant claims for libraries prevailed across the entire span of library development in the nineteenth century Wisconsin.

In 1854 the Watertown Chronicle urged the Young Men's Association to establish a library and reading room, and introduced its argument with the phrase, "It is needless to enlarge upon the value of it." The argument turned upon the low cost of such an institution rather than upon any inherent values. In 1858 State Superintendent of Public Instruction Lyman Draper advocated the establishment of town libraries under the control of town school boards rather than the then system of school district libraries. Draper saw in the proposed system the promise of libraries which would "gladden the young minds" of the 250,000 school children in the State, and which also would "furnish mental food" for the other 750,000 citizens. When the Sparta Young Men's Association was established in 1861 the Herald saluted its appearance as an event which would bring the highest "benefit" and "honor" to the village. The opening of a free reading room in Fond du Lac in 1874 prompted the Eau Claire Free Press to congratulate Fond du Lac for the establishment of such a "civilizing institution." When the Ladies of the Baraboo Industrial Art Association began their effort for the establishment of a library association the Baraboo Republic forecast an institution of "incalculable" value to Baraboo. In Fort Atkinson the Jefferson County Union told its readers:

> A Library set up in Fort Atkinson would prove a most powerful civilizing influence, make this city known throughout the State as a center of intelligence, and entitle her to a place in the front rank of progress.

The Manitowoc County Chronicle in 1892 asserted the library's effects by refusing to speak "of the value of such an institution in educating, refining and inspiring the rising generation to lofty deeds . . . ." The Waukesha Freeman was in 1894 even more exaggerative in its reticence: "There is every reason why we should have a library and none why we should not." And over in Baraboo, which yet had neither library nor viable association, "Contemplator" felt the necessity to reassure his fellow citizens of the values in libraries and similar institutions: "And so it is - - the influence of such educational institutions . . . may scarcely be noticed. And yet the web of public opinion, of public morals and private morals, is growing whiter all the time." Perhaps unconsciously, the library promoters were placing a heavy social burden upon the libraries of which they spoke in such exalted terms.[58]

It is difficult to characterize the libraries of the associations. They were small, even by the standards of the times. Few attained more than a thousand or twelve-hundred volumes. The Milwaukee Young Men's Association, which ended its career with a library of about ten thousand volumes, had at the time a collection three times as numerous as that of the next largest library, the LaCrosse Young Men's Library Association. The number of books in their collections, however, was a relatively unimportant factor in the library operations of the associations. It would be inaccurate to say that increase in their collections was not expected by the associations, but there is little evidence their members anticipated any need to concern themselves with the management of collection increase. The simple fact of organization of a library association often was interpreted as the "success" of the library.[59] Precise data on the development of the associations' collections are difficult to obtain, and the following are not presented as representative, but as illustrative of the diverse conditions which existed within the State, and the erratic development of the libraries. The Beaver Dam Library Association began its library in 1884 with an initial purchase of one thousand volumes. In February 1896 the Baraboo Library Association had been in existence for some six months, and it owned approximately one thousand volumes. The Brandon Library Association was reported at the time of its organization to have a collection of "upwards" of two hundred volumes. Nine months later the Association was reported ready to open its library with "about 100 books." The Columbus Library Association began its career with a curious assortment of fewer than fifty volumes donated by former Governor James T. Lewis. Six months after the Fond du Lac Young Men's Association was organized its library was opened with a collection of two hundred purchased volumes and forty-five which were donated. In 1873, eight years after it was organized, the Janesville Young Men's Association library had attained the number of 1,500 volumes; five years later the collection was reported to contain more than three thousand volumes, but in September 1882 it was down to an estimated 2,500 volumes. The LaCrosse Young Men's Library Association was organized in 1868; by 1872 the collection had increased to nearly two thousand "books;" a decade later the number was 3,320, and in 1886, the last year of the Association's existence, the "books" numbered 4,273. In Menomonie, after about one year of operation, the Library Association there announced that its reading room contained twenty-four newspapers in English, German and Norwegian, 170 volumes of "miscellaneous literature, and six periodicals. The New London Library Association opened its library with 1,031 volumes. The Oconomowoc Library Association began with "some" books, and in less than a year the collection increased to about 1,200 volumes, all but two hundred of which were donated. At the time of organization the Sheboygan Library Association received the approximately seven hundred volumes in the library of the First Congregational Church, and by the end of 1880 the collection had increased to approximately one thousand volumes; by the end of September 1882 it amounted to 1,200 volumes, and that was its number when the Association went out of existence in 1885. The Joseph Mann Library Association of Two Rivers had no books when it was organized. Its first collection came from donations, largely by various members of the Joseph Mann family. When the library became a public collection in 1893 the Association had amassed a total of

1,424 volumes. The Waupun Library Association, organized in January 1858, had somewhat more than 150 volumes by the end of February; twenty-two years later the Association's collection had increased only to "nearly" 3,000 volumes.[60]

Owing to their largely uncertain and irregular incomes the associations never were able to acquire books on anything like a regular schedule. Their initial purchases tended to be substantial, paid for with funds raised in the enthusiasm of the organizational efforts. Thus in March 1877 the Columbus Library Association purchased five hundred volumes at a cost of four hundred and fifty dollars; in November 1864 the Fond du Lac Young Men's Association purchased 191 volumes for $232.75; in October 1884 the Beaver Dam Library Association purchased one thousand volumes at a cost of approximately $800.[61] Existing records indicate the inability of the associations to develop systematic acquisitions programs. A successful fund raising event meant a large purchase of books, as when the Madison Institute appropriated two hundred dollars for that purpose in December 1866. The Sparta Young Men's Association, organized in 1861, apparently was unable to buy any books until the summer of 1863, when it sent off an initial order for something more than one hundred dollars' worth.[62] Otherwise, the associations appear to have purchased books in small odd lots. During the winter of 1876/1877 the Menomonie Library Association purchased in several orders a total of one hundred and fifty dollars worth. The Janesville Young Men's Association sometimes ordered in small lots of less than two dozen titles, and the Gazette considered their arrivals newsworthy enough to publish the entire lists. These orders were intermittent enough that when at its 27 February 1877 meeting the Association ordered the immediate purchase of thirty dollars' worth of books the Gazette saw it as a sign of revival in the Association. A one hundred volume purchase the next year was celebrated as a valuable increase of the library. In Ripon, between 1885 and 1893 the Library Association added "some new books" each year for an eight year total of 935.

In the prevalence of this situation the associations developed a strong reliance upon gifts of books by residents of their communities. There was in the associations (and in the press of their communities) a significant expectation of support from the citizenry at large. The expectation tended to be expressed in generalized exhortations aimed toward the realization of the citizens' duties to the associations. In several associations, however, expectations that citizens would contribute books to the libraries were elevated into something approaching acquisitions policies. Thus the Sparta Library Association, late in 1861, which "intended" to receive from liberal and public spirited residents donations of useful books for the library. In the spring of 1867 the Librarian of the Madison Institute issued a publiccall for the donation of surplus "light literature" in order that the Institute might spend more of its money on more substantial works. Four and a half months later the Institute announced that it had no money with which to buy books, and it desired citizens to donate their books which were no longer wanted. Now, however, it was more than just light reading which was desired, but any books not of an "immoral tendency," and encyclopedias, dictionaries, and sets of American and English reviews, especially. The LaCrosse Young Men's Library Association was not so specific in its request for gifts, but in December 1868 it did solicit donations of books, by letter to selected individuals in LaCrosse and by advertisements in the city's newspapers. The Superior Library Association appealed to members, residents, non-resident owners of property in Superior, and "everyone who cherishes a friendly feeling toward the place." The Neenah Library Association and the Fort Atkinson Public Library Association issued general appeals for books, and they couple them with statements to the effect that the donors would be helping the associations in two ways: gifts would increase the collections of the associations, and they would enable the associations to save money to the extent that they would not duplicate books given to them. Similar statements of the associations' dependence upon members and friends are in the Waushara *Argus* for 24 December 1865 and the Brandon *Times*, 21 November 1868.[64]

Given the uncertain and uneven development of their book collections it is not surprising that none of the associations made significant progress toward the development of selection policies or standards, although this could not have been the only retardant factor at work. Within the associations there was considerable concern about the selection of materials for the libraries, but it received expression in terms which tended toward vague generalization. "Well selected," "wisely selected," "judiciously selected," and similar phrases occurred repeatedly in discussions of the matter. "'Standard' 'books of an interesting and useful character' which were 'representative of the tastes and wants of the . . . reading public,'" may well sum up the statements on the subject.[65] There was a more strongly expressed sense of what was not wanted, although again there was ambiguity in the expression. The Madison Institute wanted nothing of an immoral tendency. "G" in Janesville wrote, "A public library, wisely selected, strangles the dime novel and other corrupting trash of that ilk . . . ." The Beaver Dam Library Association excluded controversial works, in deference to the wishes of the members.[66] In the last decade of the century there began to appear indications that the associations were responding to the book selection ideas then current among the tiny cadre of professional librarians in the State, as when the Secretary of the Oconomowoc Library Association gave voice to the ladder theory of reading development, a concept which Lutie Stearns was publicizing: Only good books were bought, chiefly fiction and juvenile works, in the belief that parents could most easily be attracted to the library through interesting the children, and that what is adapted to young people is in general enjoyed by parents, " . . . who must develop a tase for reading before they can appreciate the best literary productions."[67] By then the association libraries were entering into a stage of rapid conversion to public libraries, and the development of selection policies and standards became a professional concern.

The tasks of book selection and acquisition appear to have been decentralized within each association. Most if not all of the associations established library committees, and although their duties seldom were given clear expression they served as coordinating centers where selections received final approval or rejection. There was concern that the books acquired be in accord with the desires of the community; therefore the community was asked to take part in the process. The Library Committee of the Madison Institute requested members to hand in to the Librarian lists of preferred books. The Wisconsin State Journal broadened this appeal with a request of its own, to "the literary ladies and gentlemen of the city." The Librarian of the Neenah Library Association issued a similar request, adding that a general response would result in a collection appropriate to needs of readers. The Ripon Library Association, a majority of whose members were women, relied upon a committee of women, appointed to serve three month terms, and charged to exercise care to choose books so as to insure a collection of permanent value. (It should be noted that each of these committees chose during its tenure an average of 28 or 29 books.) The New London Library Association asked "various citizens" to hand in lists of books suitable for a public library. In November 1877 the Janesville Young Men's Association appropriated one hundred dollars for new books, and requested lists of books from all interested citizens.[68]

The library association promoters promised the libraries would contain works of enduring value. Sometimes the promises were more explicit, as when the people of Fort Atkinson were told, "There will be works to improve the skill of the machinist, woodworker and laborer of any class."[69] Perhaps that promise was kept - - the Association never published a catalog of its holdings - - but in other associations the haphazard processes of selection and acquisition, compounded by lack of money, appear to have resulted in collections which were of something less than enduring value. There are few catalogs of the associations' collections - - those of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association being the most noteworthy examples - - but a member of "classifications" were published, along with the numbers of works in each class.[70] In 1872 the LaCrosse Young Men's Library

Association's 1,980 volumes were classed as follows: 546 volumes of fiction; 695 volumes of bound periodicals, public documents, and miscellaneous (320 volumes); and 739 volumes in history, biography, science, poetry, travel and adventure, books for the young, and reference. Twenty-three years later the 1,031 volumes of the New London Library Association were organized as follows: 460 volumes in "American history, folklore, sociology, religion, biography, science, travel, general works, ethical culture, Belles Letters, essays and drama;" 470 volumes of "juvenile, junior, American and English" fiction; and 20 volumes of "miscellaneous," with 31 volumes unaccounted. The other published classifications and volume counts reveal considerable similarity except for some variance in terminology, and substantial but random variance in the holdings of public documents. Perhaps the collections comprehended in such lists were largely satisfactory to the libraries' users, for there was little complaint about them.

When the library associations began their development in Wisconsin their need for specialized quarters was not appreciated. Next to the association itself the collection of books was the most important consideration; apparently quarters in which to house the books were an afterthought. The records of the associations contain little information which indicates more than a casual concern about where the books were to be located or what facilities would be associated with them. Many associations opened their libraries without reading rooms. The Waupun Library Association maintained its library in the office of attorney Edwin Hillyer. The collection of the Eau Claire Library Association was kept in a store on the main street. In Sparta another attorney was Librarian of the Young Men's Association, and the library was kept in his office. The 1866 Viroqua Library Association housed its collection in Layne's Confectionary. The library of the Madison Institute was in the office of the City Treasurer. That of the Superior Library Association was in the County Court room in the Coddington Building. The second Viroqua Library Association (1880) first kept its library in the office of Judge Wyman. It had four other locations in the next fifteen years: Miss Luther's Store, W. S. Field's office, Dr. Chambers' office, and Colonel Butt's office. Between 1880 and 1893 the Ripon Library Association's library was quartered in four different stores around town. Presumably these various quarters were free to the associations involved; the records contain no discussion of rents.[71]

On the other hand, a number of library associations had separate quarters for their libraries, or almost so. The Franklin Library Association of Fond du Lac had at least one room above a downtown store. The Janesville Young Men's Association library and meeting room were located in the Lappin Building, which also contained the Post Office.

The Fond du Lac Young Men's Association began with a room in the Agricultural Building. The Wautoma Library Association had the use of a room adjoining the office of the Waushara Argus. Similarly, the Brandon Library Association opened its library in the front portion of the Brandon Times Building. The Sheboygan Library Association luxuriated, relatively, in quarters on the second floor of the Sheboygan Bank Building, rooms which included a "smoking and amusement room." The Beaver Dam Library Association had a room in the City Hall.[72]

In several cases it is clear that quarters for the library associations were provided as a form of subsidy from either private or public sources. In 1863 the Milwaukee Young Men's Association moved from its original quarters to rooms in the new Milwaukee Sentinel Building. The proprietors of the Sentinel, members of the Association, made the rooms available at a rent of three hundred dollars a year. The President of the Association reported that similar quarters elsewhere had been considered, but they would have cost at least one thousand dollars a year. The Fond du Lac Young Men's Association room in the Agricultural Building cost the Association ten dollars a year. In Beaver Dam the Library Association received a measure of support from the City Council, which offered the Association free use of the City Treasurer's office, and ordered the Treasurer to move in with the City Clerk. The Fort Atkinson Public Library Association received free quarters in the "large north room" in the suite of rooms rented by the Fort Atkinson Business Men's Association.[73]

Moving their libraries was a frequent experience for the library associations. The wanderings of the Ripon and Viroqua Library Associations have been mentioned. However, the available records are silent as to the reasons for the moves; in the case of Viroqua one senses from the record an increasing disinterest on the part of members, and ". . . it finally landed in Colonel Butt's office." The Sparta Young Men's Association moved into larger quarters in 1874, a move which seems to have been required by the increase of the library, which had reached the number of one thousand volumes.[74] Perhaps no association suffered more misfortune in this respect than the Oshkosh Library Association; its library was moved eight times in twenty-two years. In 1869/1870 the library was in rented quarters in the second floor rear of a store building. During the 1870/1872 it was housed in free quarters in an attorney's office. From some time in 1872 until December 1874 the Association rented two rooms, one of which was a reading room, in the same building as the attorney's office. A financial crisis in the Association compelled the removal of the library to one room in the Gill Building in January 1875; in April the Gill Building burned to the ground. Some books were saved owing to their being out on loan at the time, and the library was reopened in the residence of Librarian Mary Olcott. In August or September

1875 the library was moved into a room on the second floor of Caswell's Dry Goods Store. After two or three months the library was moved to a smaller room in the same building because the owner of the store was offered a higher rent than the Association could pay. After about a year there (late in 1876) the library was turned out because the storeowner needed the room. At this point the fortunes of the Association improved somewhat, and it was able to rent two rooms on the second floor of the National Bank Building, above the portion occupied by the Post Office. There the library remained until a Federal Building was constructed in 1891, and the Post Office was moved into it. The new tenants in the National Bank Building also wanted the library rooms, and the Association, probably in arrears in rent, was turned out. The Library Association went out of existence, and the books were put into storage in Mary Olcott's home.[75]

A differing set of circumstances surrounded the various moves of the Young Men's Association of Milwaukee, which opened its first reading room in 1856. Those quarters soon came to be regarded as unsatisfactory, but the Association remained there for seven years, possibly owing to a sense of uncertainty about its future. At the annual meeting in 1863 the outgoing President referred to the accumulated complaints about difficulty of access, bad lighting, and the "repulsive" entrance; and then announced the arrangements for better rooms in the new Sentinel Building. The

Association moved into these rooms in the summer of 1863, and remained there until 1867. These were the most prosperous years of the Association, and a rapidly increasing library - - then containing some 10,000 volumes - - dictated a move to new quarters. The Association's preparations for this move in 1867 offer the only instance of a Wisconsin library association which planned for the increase of its library. The new quarters were in an existing building, but they were remodeled to specifications set by the Association Directors. The rooms were planned for a capacity of 15,000 volumes, but were arranged so that with some reconstruction they could accomodate up to 30,000. However, sheer expansionism also played a part in the decision to move, for the President of the Association boasted that the new quarters would not be surpassed by those of any similar association on the continent, and possibly not even equalled. The Association moved its library only once more, in the spring of 1872; a financial crisis compelled relocation in smaller quarters.[76]

A few of the library associations did obtain their own buildings, but in each case the property was a gift. In 1868 Colonel Kiler K. Jones of Quincy, Illinois, and a former resident of Manitowoc, offered to give a library to Manitowoc provided an association was formed to assure maintenance of the gift. Residents responded by organizing the Jones Library Association. The gift actually consisted of a building and several unimproved lots in Manitowoc. For a while the Association prospered, and amassed a library of 1,500 to 1,600 volumes. The Librarian of the Association received free living quarters as compensation. The Association proved unable to maintain the building, it became dilapidated, the Librarian resigned and moved out, and the Association was moribund.[77] In Glenbeulah, an unincorporated hamlet near Sheboygan, a library association was in existence during the eighteen-eighties and early-nineties. In 1891 the Association purchased Lyceum Hall, but the owner demonstrated his public spirit by transferring his "large interest" in the Hall for a nominal sum.[78] The other association with its own building was the Joseph Mann Library Association of Two Rivers. In the fall of 1890 a self-generated citizens' committee began to plan the organization of the Association. Their first report recommended: (1) that a building be erected at once, and (2) that one thousand dollars be solicited for the purpose. As a result of the committee's report a citizens' meeting was called, and at that meeting the first act of the as-yet unnamed library association was the creation of a building committee. By the spring of 1891 organization of the association had been completed, and the name had been adopted in appreciation for the money and books donated by the Mann Family. Then, at a meeting of the Directors on 2 June 1891 the Building Committee reported it had been unable to attract bids on the plan for a building. Why contractors would not bid on the building was not reported, but the Directors begged the question by instructing the Committee to go ahead and build according to plans and specifications, but at the least possible cost. The library opened late in 1891. The Joseph Mann Library Association appears to have been the only one in the State to have made a building the first order of business. The episode is one indication that the concept of a public library now included a building as well as books.[79]

In financial matters, as in most others, there was great variation among the associations. Like practices did occur, but they were more a matter of development from similar backgrounds than of imitation. Aside from public programs sponsored by the associations their only regular incomes came from membership fees, user charges, fines and other assessments against their members or users of their libraries. Seven of the associations charged initiation fees. Those of Columbus and Menomonie had the lowest: fifty cents. The LaCrosse Young Men's Library Association, the Madison Institute and the Joseph Mann Library Association charged initiation fees of one dollar. The Wautoma Library Association charged a two dollar fee, but it could be paid in books which the Directors might accept as equal in value; the Green Bay Library Association imposed an initiation fee of two dollars, cash.[80]

The dues structures of the associations were more complex. Three of the chartered associations had annual dues specified in their charters: fifty cents for the Waterloo Dramatic and Library Association, five dollars for the Beloit Library Association, and four dollars for the Jones Library Association. For the Waterloo Association two consecutive annual memberships constituted a life membership; in the Beloit group six annual payments accrued a life membership. In the other associations dues were established in their constitutions or by-laws. Dues of one dollar a year were set by the Columbus Library Association, the Eau Claire Citizens' Library Association, the LaCrosse Young Men's Library Association, the Neenah Library Association (one dollar for "active" members; honorary members paid five dollars), and the Joseph Mann Library Association. At the time it was organized the Madison Institute established a dues scale of three dollars a year or ten dollars for five years; upon its reorganization in 1866 dues were set at one dollar a year. Annual dues of two dollars were charged by the Brandon Library Association, the Beaver Dam Library Association, Eau Claire Library Association, Fond du Lac Young Men's Association, Janesville Library Association, Kenosha Public Library Association, Milwaukee Young Men's Association (1847-1867), Oconomowoc Library Association (1893), and the Sheboygan Library Association after its reorganization in 1885. Three dollars annual dues were charged by the Green Bay Library Association, the Milwaukee Young Men's Association after 1867, and the Waupun Library Association. In Green Bay the dues could be paid in quarterly installments, and in Janesville monthly installments were allowed. Quarterly payments were allowed informally by the Milwaukee Young Men's Association, a practice which contributed much to the confusion in their membership records. The Menomonie Library Association specified dues of twenty-five cents per month, presumably to allow lumberjacks to drop out of the association during the logging season. The West Eau Claire Library Association established a variable dues scale: one to three dollars a year. Apparently the Association meant to establish a rate of one dollar for a single person, two dollars for a man and wife, and three dollars for a family; but the report on the matter is unclear. Payment could be made in cash or in books of equal value.[81]

Flat fee life memberships were available in several associations; fifty dollars in the Eau Claire Library Association, thirty dollars in the Green Bay Library Association and the Madison Institute, twenty-five dollars in the Jones Library Association and the Superior Library Association, and ten dollars in the Columbus Library Association. In the Milwaukee Young Men's Association from 1847 - 1867 a life membership cost twenty-five dollars; in March 1867 the price was increased to fifty dollars.[82]

Charges for use of the associations' libraries are less susceptible to simple statement. In the Fond du Lac Young Men's Association a one dollar annual charge for use of the library seemed to involve some condition of membership, but precisely what is not clear from the record. Membership in the Ripon Library Association was invitational, but anyone could use the library for a rental of five cents per volume per week. In Fond du Lac again, the Neocosmian Society established a "free reading room" in 1873; use of the library, however, was conditional upon payment of fees established by the Board of Directors (the amount of the fee was not published). The Wautoma Library Association allowed non-members to use the reading room for a ten cent "entrance fee," payment of which was required, apparently, for each "use" of the reading room. The Marquette Library Association of Sheboygan permitted what appears to have been full access to the library for a fee of ten cents per month.[83]

Several library associations relied upon popular subscriptions as a funding device, but primarily to raise money for the establishment of the associations rather than for their maintenance. The Beaver Dam Library Association combined subscription with membership; a person could join upon payment of a two dollar subscription. The Association also introduced an element of stock ownership into their membership: for each additional two dollars subscribed the member acquired an additional vote in the Association. The

New London Library Association organized with approximately three hundred dollars obtained by subscriptions of varying amounts. The Joseph Mann Library Association was named for the late husband of the principal donor to the Association, but when the organization began to come into existence the organizers relied primarily upon public subscription. 306 of the city's 2,890 people contributed sums which ranged from twenty-five cents to one hundred and fifty dollars, to a total of $1,122.[84]

In several library organizations there were attempts to form stock associations. The Fort Howard Literary Society, the Neenah Library Association, the Oshkosh Library Association, and the Sheboygan Library Association actually issued stock. In Fort Howard one hundred shares at ten dollars each were authorized, and more than fifty shares were sold. The Oshkosh Library Association had about one hundred and fifty members called stockholders. The Sheboygan Library Association authorized the issue of three hundred shares at ten dollars each. Within a week of organization 112 shares were sold, but apparently no more than that. The Neenah Library Association began organization in 1881; in the spring of 1883 the Directors received an anonymous offer of one thousand dollars if they would raise an equal amount. Thus they proposed that the Association incorporate and issue two hundred shares of stock at five dollars each. The shares were sold, but the task required six months of very hard work by the members of the Association. Other associations were less successful with plans for issuing stock. In 1849 the Directors of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association proposed that the Association become a stock company, but at the annual meeting the proposal suffered such a decisive defeat that at least until 1861 no member thought it wise even to bring the matter up again. In 1881 and 1882 Baraboo was the scene of a relatively intense effort to establish a public library; toward the end of 1881 the various groups and individuals involved began to coalesce around the idea of a library association, and a committee was established to effect the association. In June 1882 the committee submitted a report to a meeting of interested persons. They recommended the formation of a stock association which would issue one thousand shares at two dollars each, to be paid in cash or books. No person would be allowed to hold more than five shares. Actual organization of the association would occur after two hundred and fifty shares had been sold. After some debate the meeting adopted an amended report which called for an issue of five hundred shares at two dollars each. A new committee was appointed to carry out this mandate. Toward the end of November 1882 this latter committee reported that it had been able to sell fewer than two hundred shares, even after dropping the limit of five shares per person, and the Baraboo Library Association was stillborn.[85] A number of other putative associations met a similar fate.

In the operation of their libraries the associations acted from elementary concepts of budgeting, and the financial reports of their officers amounted to no more than simple recapitulations of income and outgo. For most of the associations financial reports are scarce or non-existent, but those which are available indicate that the associations did little to develop fiscal practices in accord with contemporary accounting procedures. From the smallest association to the largest their treasurers' reports were nothing more than records of where the money came from and where it went. Perhaps their outstanding characteristic is the detailed categorization of income and expenditure which they exhibit.[86]

In Wisconsin public library development was largely static during the nineteenth century. From the Territorial period to the close of the century the definition of a public library hardly changed, if we may accept the evidence of results. The public libraries promoted by Frank Hutchins during his tenure as executive officer of the Free Library Commission (1895-1904) were hardly different from those envisioned by the organizers of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association or the Madison Institute. Of the 126 free public libraries in Wisconsin as of 30 June 1904, 79 had collections of less than three thousand volumes, 42 of which were under one thousand. To put the matter in a different perspective: 34 of the 126 had attained a ratio of one book per capita.

The list of those is instructive about the state of library collections in Wisconsin at the end of the century. Milwaukee, then a city of 285,000, boasted the second-largest library in the State, with 145,000 volumes.[87]

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN WISCONSIN IN 1904 WITH HOLDINGS OF AT LEAST ONE VOLUME PER CAPITA

Place	Population	No. of Vols.
Arcadia	1,273	1,431
Bayfield	1,689	3,053
Beaver Dam	5,128	7,950
Belleville	385	2,422
Columbus	2,349	2,874
Cumberland	1,328	1,620
Darlington	1,808	1,950
Eleva	225	318
Elkhorn	1,731	3,020
Evansville	1,864	3,334
Fond du Lac	15,110	21,470
Hartland	629	842
Hayward	2,525	2,748
Hillsboro	785	960
Janesville	13,185	16,065
Kenosha	11,606	14,836
Kilbourn (Wisconsin Dells)	1,134	1,683
Lake Mills	1,387	1,676
Menomonie	5,655	9,132
Merrill	8,537	8,640
Mineral Point	2,991	3,602
Monroe	3,927	5,685
Mosinee	657	1,436
Neenah	5,954	8,404
Neillsville	2,104	2,669
Oakfield	475	922
Oconomowoc	2,880	3,787
Reedsburg	2,225	2,214
Sparta	3,555	4,706
Viroqua	1,950	2,284
Wausaukee	500	1,573
Wauwautosa	2,842	4,454
Whitehill	600	1,514
Whitewater	3,405	4,124

Source: Wisconsin, Free Library Commission, Fifth Biennial Report, 1904, pp. 72-75.

Chapter 5

The Transition From the Library Association to the Public Library

In 1872 the Wisconsin Legislature authorized municipalities of Wisconsin to establish libraries supported by a levy upon assessed property within their boundaries. The Bill was of little moment in the Legislature. There were no substantial numbers of citizens who desired such an act: public library sentiment in the State was latent and unorganized. One may not say that the Public Library Act was premature, but in many communities in the State there still was belief that the library association was adequate to their needs: and, in fact, that belief remained strong, although declining, through the remaining years of the century. In 1872 there were library associations in at least eleven cities. During the next twenty-eight years at least another eighty-six associations were organized, and more were organized after the turn of the century. Nevertheless a significant change had been established. The Public Library Act presented the people of Wisconsin an alternate mehtod for organizing their interests in libraries.

The process of transition from social libraries to public libraries was uncertain, and, to some extent, unconsidered. It may be said to have begun as soon as Wisconsin received Territorial status, for the property limit in the Michigan Social Libraries Act was a brake upon the development of social libraries. The continuation of such limits in subsequent acts and charters, however haphazardly imposed, was in itself an indication that the people of Wisconsin were uncertain about the nature of library associations. The Town Library Act of 1868 expressed a continuation of that uncertainty, especially in its provision that a town could spend no more than one hundred and fifty dollars annually for a library. The Public Library Act contained similar indicators, with its limits upon the independence of libraries established under the Act.

Given this uncertainty it is not surprising that the record of transition from social to public libraries was such a hesitant one. The Public Library Act came almost unsought, and was achieved without public discussion; even after it took effect it received very little attention from the State at large. Before the establishment of the Wisconsin Library Association and the Free Library Commission the provisions of the Act came to the attention of various communities in response to purely local considerations, and patterns of library development were almost non-existent. There is no evidence, for example, that the experience gained in the establishment of the Fond du Lac Public Library was known or applied elsewhere. Different communities did in some cases have similar experience, but to the extent that pattern implies design it is inaccurate to refer to patterns of development. Rather, an older institution - - the New England Social Library - - had been transported to the Middle-Western frontier, and its development was arrested. The social conditions of Wisconsin were approximate to those of 18th century New England for only an instant, after which there began a turbulent era of change and development which has not yet ended. Almost as quickly as it became established in Wisconsin the social library was obsolescent.

The New England approach to social libraries was summed up in Jeremy Belknap's statement on them:[1]

> A few neighbors joined together in setting up a library . . . may not only acquire but originate knowledge . . . they may diffuse their knowledge, ripen their plans, correct their mistakes, and promote the cause of science and humanity in a very considerable degree.

A century later Charles Pratt attempted the same sort of statement in his address to the Ashland Library Association but the differences between eighteenth century New Hampshire and nineteenth century Wisconsin reduced his remarks to nostalgia. Given the conditions which existed in Wisconsin it was inevitable that the library association would change in nature. It would be fascinating to speculate on how that institution could have changed and survived, but the change which occurred was decline into near extinction.

To an apparently overwhelming degree the associations foundered within a year or two of their establishment.

Thirteen managed to stay in existence for ten years or more. They were: Columbus Library Association* (1876-1901), the Fond du Lac Young Men's Association* (1864-1876), the Fond du Lac Neocosmian Society* (1866-1876), the Howard Library Association of Gilmanton (1865-19(?), the Janesville Young Men's Association (1865-1882), the La Crosse Young Men's Library Association* (1868-1888), the Madison Institute* (1853-1875), the Jones Library Association of Manitowoc (1868-1888), the Young Men's Association of Milwaukee* (1847-1877), the Oshkosh Library Association (1869-1890), the Ripon Library Association (1884-1898), and the Waupun Library Association* (1854-1904). Those associations signified by an asterisk expired coincident with the establishment of municipal public libraries. For a number of other associations of shorter longevity a similar coincidence allows precise determination of their end of existence, for example, the Beaver Dam Library Association in 1885. A handful of associations terminated in circumstances which evoked some public comment about the matter, such as the demise of the Sheboygan Library Association in 1885. For the most part, however, the associations expired in silence.[2]

There were occasional posthumous comments about the demise of some associations, as when in April, 1908, W. M. Tompkins, a former Secretary of the Ashland Library Association, added a postscript to the final entry in the Association's Minutes. The Association, he said, "was abandoned" in the spring of 1876 because its original objective had been achieved; the Town of Ashland established a Town Library, to which the Association gave its collection, and then went out of existence. Tompkin's statement is the only record of the end of the Association. The records of its organization contain no such statement of objective, nor does the paper Charles Pratt read at the first meeting of the Association.[3]

Most of the more than one hundred and fifty library associations left scant records of their existence. They came into being, enjoyed relatively short careers, and ceased to be, and their existence evoked little comment in their communities. In many instances it is affirmed by mere passing reference, as:

> A circulating library was established in Chetek in 1888 by the business and professional men together with other citizens. It flourished for a while . . . .[4]

In several communities there was sufficient interest in the associations to allow the development of relatively extensive records, which illustrate the problems that confronted them. Some can be stated in general terms, as having affected all associations: lack of public interest in them, for example.[5] Inept management or incompetent leadership was another factor cited as harmful if not fatal to a number of associations.[6] In some communities sectional rivalries contributed to the failure of library associations.[7]

A financial crisis was the immediate cause for failure of many library associations. However, such difficulty usually was only symptomatic of more serious problems. The Baraboo Library Association of 1882 was unable to sell the two hundred shares of stock believed to be the necessary minimum on which to base formal organization. On this point, however, the chairman of the solicitation committee reported that a number of those approached as potential stockholders declined to buy shares because they wanted a municipal public library in Baraboo.[8] The Janesville Young Men's Association became bankrupt when it was unable to raise the approximately two hundred dollars necessary to keep its library open, but the Janesville Gazette was of the opinion that this resulted from the Association's inability to attract new members who could replace an active leadership group whose personal and business responsibilities had developed to a point which precluded further leadership in the Association.[9] In Milwaukee in 1876 the five year old Germania Society was five hundred dollars in debt, and without prospects for payment. It is apparent, however, that fractionalism in the Society prevented development of a program for rescue from their embarrassment.[10] In 1896 the Sheboygan Falls Library Association was eking out a precarious existence, and the treasury was down to four dollars. At this point the members simply gave up, and voted to turn their books over to the high school, and to disband.[11]

Many of the associations followed straight lines of existence. In some cases, for example, the Madison Young Men's Association, the Racine Young Men's Association (1854), and the Oshkosh Young Men's Association (1854), the lines were on a steep decline from organization to oblivion. For others the lines were sharply upward, from organization to disbandment on the establishment of municipal public libraries. This occurred in Beaver Dam in 1884/1885, Kenosha in 1895/1896, Menomonie and Sparta in 1874, and Two Rivers in 1890-1893. Other associations had what appear to have been equal opportunities for successful development, and found instead their existences were to terminate in failure. Failure may well be the wrong word to use in view of the fact that so many of the associations had such inchoately stated objectives; many seemed content to drift.

Four were not content to drift, but each proved inadequate to the self-imposed task of maintaining a public library. Each ran a separate course to collapse, and the details of their declines illuminate the diversity which prevailed in library development in Wisconsin. The four were: the Janesville Young Men's Association, the Young Men's Association of the City of Milwaukee (to use their full corporate name), the Oshkosh Library Association, and the Sheboygan Library Association.

The Janesville Young Men's Association was founded in 1865, and developed steadily during the remainder of the sixties. It appeared to be firmly established by 1870, but it then entered a period of decline. The lectures from which the Association earned its principal income became unprofitable ventures. At the same time the interest of both members and the general public waned to a point where the Janesville Gazette began to express editorial concern about the state of the Association, in the fall of 1871. The small number of regular library users was deplored, and the editors expressed an earnest hope that the new officers soon to be elected would find a way to secure to the Association the pervasive influence the library should attain. The Gazette presumed to speak for the members to encourage the election of officers who would enlarge public interest in the Association.[12] This, the Gazette continued, required the membership to take a larger interest in the Association, and work for the nomination of the right sort of candidates. In a post-election editorial the paper expressed uncertainty about the new officers of the Association, and their capacity to deal with the crisis in its affairs. The vigor with which the new officers undertook efforts for putting the Association in a sound financial position may have reassured the Gazette, for there were no more editorials in that vein. In any event, during the winter and spring of 1871/1872 the Association's program ventures earned - - for their circumstances - - substantial income, and it appeared more able to meet its responsibilities to the city.[13]

In the spring of 1872 came a development which promised to assure the future of the Association. The Janesville City charter was amended to allow the City Council to appropriate to the Association one-half of the City's receipts from liquor licenses. This boon proved to be difficult to collect, and of short duration. The Council balked at appropriating the money, and submitted only under the coercion of the courts; and the amendment was repealed in the 1873 session of the Legislature. It is likely that the loss of these funds was a severe blow to the morale of the Association. During 1873/1874 there was no attempt to reinstate the programs which had proved so successful during 1871/1872, but which had not been repeated in 1872/1873. By the late winter of 1873/1874 the Association was once again in a condition of decline.[14]

In March 1874 some members of the Association became involved with the Janesville Ladies Temperance Union attempt to organize a free library and reading room. Meanwhile, the Association settled into a small routine of meetings and debates, the audiences for which were mainly members. Their activities attracted little attention save sarcastic references in the city press.[15] By December 1876 the Association had slipped to the point where its annual meeting had to be postponed. In the meantime a number of the more prominent members had been engaged in the activities of a literary society and the mutual improvement Club. Hence it was with something of an air of surprise that the Gazette reported on 26 January 1877 that the Association's members intended to rebuild. The effort came to naught, but the Association remained in tenuous existence. In 1879 there was reported another attempt at its revival, but the effort did not appear to occasion any change in the condition of the Association, which remained one of slow decline.[16] In March 1881 the Association was reported unable to pay expenses, and the Gazette urged its replacement by a public library; and also reported that the leading members of the Association (without identifying them) were in favor of turning the Association library over to the city. There was no public reaction. Nearly a year later the Gazette repeated the suggestion that Janesville should have a public library. Again there was no public response. Then in July 1882 came the announcement that the Association was bankrupt. At this point the pace of library development in Janesville quickened; in the next ten months the Young Men's Association went out of existence, the Janesville Library Association was founded, and after a short campaign the Janesville Public Library was established.[17]

It is apparent that from about 1871 the Janesville Young Men's Association was not an effective library organization. Some contributory factors in its ineffectiveness can be identified in rather general terms. The Association after 1871 was unable to attract membership in sufficient numbers to provide a dependable financial base for its operations, and unable to attract members who could furnish either charismatic or social leadership - - the the latter inability may have been the more costly. That public indifference to the Association was coupled with apathy about Janesville's need for a library seems obvious, but this appearance may have resulted really from staisfaction with the supply of books available to Janesville readers. The Literary Society and the Mutual Improvement Club, both of which contained a number of influential persons who were also members of the Young Men's Association, were discussion oriented groups. The free library and reading room established by the Temperance Union was a device rather than an end; the Temperance Union wold have used any moral means to attract young men away from saloons. Even so, the ladies attracted support which might otherwise have gone to the Young Men's Association. Finally, in Sutherland's Book Store the people of Janesville had what the Gazette sometimes regarded as adequate access to books.[18]

Founded in 1847, the Milwaukee Young Men's Association had an uncertain first two years or so, a decade of steady development, and five years of rather spectacular advance during the Civil War and the immediate post-War years. The fact that during the first two years after the War there was no retrogression in either the general economic situation or the Association's position emboldened its leadership, and in

1867 the Board of Directors arranged for newer, larger, and more sumptuous quarters. The Board which arranged for the new quarters and then went out of office in May 1867 possessed an almost unbridled optimism about the future of the Association, and saluted their successors for being the ones fated for "the inauguration and enjoyment of the promised land." Four years later catastrophe confronted the Association. It was struggling with debt, the lecture programs had changed from a source of profit to one of worry, the membership figures were seriously inflated, and the quality of the library was declining disastrously. Press speculations about the chances for survival were pessimistic. In November 1871 one group of Association members began to talk about soliciting the business and professional residents of Milwaukee for a thirty thousand dollar endowment fund, an amount which they estimated could be obtained easily and would be adequate for some years to come. The plan was endorsed by the Board of Directors and the Milwaukee press. The Board also called an emergency meeting of the Association and their friends, to be held on 26 December 1871. The News, the Sentinel and the Evening Wisconsin gave extensive coverage to the meeting. Although all three papers reported a strong attendance it seems doubtful, from the record of the meeting, that more than ten per cent (approximately one hundred and forty) of the members attended. President Robert Hill presented a comprehensive report on the condition of the

Association, which was grave, stated that the Board had no plan for resolution of the situation, and opened the meeting to discussion. It was not very helpful. There was a considerable amount of pointless talk, and a meaningless resolution: "That this Association shall not be permitted to die." Otherwise, the meeting accomplished nothing except to leave the Board free to pursue the proposal for an endowment fund. The Board had endorsed the plan, but the actual work was being carried out by a group which does not appear to have had formal sanction from the Board or the membership. In any event, they failed. Ten thousand dollars in pledges were obtained by 15 January 1872, but by mid-February the drive had collapsed. The Association weathered the crisis through retrenchment, removal into smaller quarters, some cancellation of debts, and some gifts from a few of those who had pledge contributions to the endowment fund.[19]

During the next three years the Association rebounded sharply as lecture profits increased greatly from the low of 1871/1872. By 1875 stability seemed to have been achieved. Indeed, on 4 May 1875 the outgoing President recommended the purchase of land as soon as feasible, and the beginning of preparation for the construction of its own building. His successor did not repeat this hopeful recommendation, but the tone of his report for 1875/1876 was generally optimistic. As has been reported, during 1875-1877 the profits from lecture courses again declined precipitously. Despite this, at the 1877 Annual Meeting the outgoing President spoke of "the dawn of brighter times" which had come during this past year: the Association was free of debt, and had a net income of $547.00 for 1876/1877.[20]

There were, however, indications of continuing decline within the Association. Early in April 1877 the Daily News gave editorial recognition to rumors of mismanagement and neglect by the officers of the Association, complaints about the behavior of library employees, and a rapidly declining membership. Late in April "Member" wrote to the Sentinel and repeated these as yet unspecified charges. These matters were not directly alluded to in the President's report, but he did state that recataloging of the library had revealed more than two thousand books as missing or so badly mutilated they were effectively destroyed. He also reported that some retrenchment had become necessary - - effected through reduction of library employees' salaries - - but he regarded this is a temporary setback caused by poor business conditions during the past year.[21]

The Association elected officers one week after the annual meeting; usually there were two slates of candidates. In 1877 there were three, one of which called itself the Law and Order Ticket, presumably with reference to the candidates' intention to prevent further damage to the library. During the campaign, which lasted a week, there was some repetition of the earlier charges about mismanagement.

Whatever their effect, the Law and Order Ticket won an upset victory.[22]

Almost immediately the new Board of Directors touched off a painful controversy about reappointment of the Librarian. She was offered reappointment, but at a salary of five hundred dollars (a 37½% reduction). She refused, and the position was offered to the Assistant Librarian, who also refused but changed her mind a few days later. Subsequently the former Librarian negotiated reappointment at a salary of six hundred and fifty dollars (an 18-3/4% reduction). The imbroglio lasted more than a week, and received extended coverage in the newspapers. The Board received some severe criticisms for its actions, and appeared to be divided deeply on the issue. By the end of May 1877, however, the differences among the Directors were papered over if not resolved, and criticism of the Association disappeared from the news. A benefit concert at the end of May earned $263 for the Association, which sum was to be used for a much needed renovation of the library's quarters. This was accomplished by July, to apparent general satisfaction.[23]

The imemdiate problems resolved, or removed from public view, the Association was prepared to embark on another year of quiet struggle for existence. Their condition was only fair, but there was no public movement by either officers or members to try to do anything more than keep afloat. It may well have been a surprise to the members to read in the Milwaukee Daily News of 9 September that their library had been offered to the City as the nucleus for a public library. The Association had not met since May, and there had been no open discussion of the proposal. On 10 September the Sentinel published a somewhat confused endorsement of the idea, citing it as one prompted only by a desire to improve the library, and to make it available to the entire city. The Sentinel asserted that the Association was not "embarrassed," and that if the City would not accept the offer the Association would continue as before. Except for newspaper endorsements there was little public discussion of the offer. After more than two months of silence on the subject, the officers of the Association explained it to an apparently lightly attended meeting on 20 November. The next day the Association ratified the proposal, 83 - 11. Some nine hundred members registered their apathy about the Association by not voting. Two months later the Legislature formally terminated the Association, and called for the surrender of its charter. The end of the Association was not publicly regretted.[24]

Unlike the associations in Janesville and Milwaukee the Oshkosh Library Association was a shaky organization from its inception. From organization in 1869 until 1872 it did not meet. In what President Hutchinson termed a "revival" the Association met in 1872 and elected new officers, whose tenure lasted until 1883. In 1872 Mary Olcott became

Librarian, and her determination kept the library in existence, and even in a condition of slow increase. The fire which destroyed the library in 1875 turned out to be only a temporary setback; unknown to the Association, the Secretary had carried at his own expense a $1,200 insurance policy on the collection. This happy circumstance, plus gifts of books from publishers and friends of the Association, enabled it to make a quick and vigorous recovery from the fire. In the summer of 1876 the Association was compelled to seek new quarters, and the temperament of Mary Olcott again became cricital to the life of the Association. The Oshkosh Y.M.C.A. offered free quarters for the Library Association if Miss Olcott would also take over management of the Y.M.C.A. library. Although some members of the Library Association strongly urged acceptance her determined disapproval was the deciding factor in rejection of the proposal. For the next fifteen years the Association remained alive, but almost at a standstill. During this period Miss Olcott was the principal factor in keeping it going. She paid the rent with money obtained by the rental of books, purchased with her own funds the fuel for heating and lighting the rooms, served as janitor as well as librarian, and purchased books with such money as came to the Association in occasional gifts. Her salary was supposed to be ten dollars a month, but it was constantly in arrears; during one four year period she received nothing; in 1883 she was paid seventy dollars in salary. In 1900 she reckoned the Association still her debtor by more than four hundred dollars.[25]

In 1884 the officers of the Association saw a brightening of its prospects. There was some brief discussion of asking the City Council to impose a small tax for the library. Nothing came of that idea, but a few days later the President of the Association spoke his determination to improve the condition of "that public institution." He said that there would be an attempt to raise two hundred dollars by subscription, and also the introduction of a system of assessments which would require the stockholders, of whom there were about one hundred fifty, and who were the only members, to contribute regular support to the Association. These proposals foundered quickly. President H.W. McKoy resigned, and Marshall Harris assumed the office. For nearly six more years the Association continued a desultory existence.[26]

Late in 1889 one of the members, Colonel Gabriel Bouck, declared that the city's library situation was a disgrace which should be remedied. He offered to be one of ten men who would each contribute one hundred dollars toward revitalization of the Association, and named some others he thought would do likewise. The Daily Northwestern seized on his remarks, and enlarged them into an argument for a public library in Oshkosh. The City Council responded by authorizing a referendum on the question at the spring election in 1890. The Association split on this issue. Former President Hutchinson declared that Colonel Bouck's proposal would fail, as had similar attempts in the past. Bouck denounced the idea of a tax supported library as an example of paternalism characteristic of the Dark Ages. Marshall Harris came out for a public library established by private philanthropy; he offered to give one thousand dollars toward its establishment if others in the city would contribute nine thousand dollars. The Association remained uncommitted to any proposal. During the winter of 1889/1890 the Daily Northwestern kept the public library proposal constantly before the voters, and on 1 April 1890 it was defeated by about six hundred and fifty votes. By this time it was known that the Association would lose its quarters over the Post Office, and the members were reported as despondent and uncertain about their future.[27]

A few days before the election Marshall Harris had repeated his pledge, and had liberalized the conditions under which he would give the money: he would give that sum whether the voters approved the public library, and whether others would subscribe, if the City would give quarters to the Association. The City did not act on this proposal, nor did any other person make a public pledge of money for the Association. On 9 April 1890 the Association met to decide its future. It split into three groups, apparently: those who wished to let the Association expire, those who wished to continue on the present basis, and those who wished to keep it alive for another attempt, at the next election, to get a public library established. The members were unable to arrive at a decision, and subsequent meetings were not reported. Once more, Mary Olcott resolved the issue. She put the library into storage. Nevertheless, the Association remained tenuously alive. Sometime before his death in 1891 Marshall Harris offered to contribute one hundred dollars if Miss Olcott were able to raise an additional four hundred, or two hundred dollars if she were able to raise eight hundred. She was unable to raise either amount. In the spring of 1892 some members of the Association, led by George Buckstaff, determined to raise five thousand dollars by solicitation. Mr. Buckstaff offered five hundred dollars, and the law firm of Bray and Choate pledged three hundred. This attempt failed also. For all practical purposes the Association was defunct, although in 1895 several of the members played significant roles in another campaign to establish a public library.[28]

The Sheboygan Library Association began its career with advantages most other associations had lacked: a good book collection, and a particularly able leadership group. (Five of the Directors subsequently became Mayors of Sheboygan.) Also, through their connections with the People's Institute they had gained considerable experience. Indeed, for some four years the Sheboygan Library Association was a vigorous and significant contributor to the cultural life of the city. Then, deserted by the leadership, it struggled to reorganization, and was plundered by that same abdicated leadership. Precisely when this succession of events began to develop cannot be ascertained, but they were in motion by October 1883. At the annual meeting on 6 October some unspecified reorganization took place, although its significance was not evident, either to members or reporters. Two weeks later the new President of the Association, William Elwell, delivered an inaugural address, which was itself an innovation in the Association's affairs. The address was a discussion of the state of the Association: its objectives, the extent to which they had been attained, and where the Association had falled short of the founders' expectations. Elwell also forecast the fate of the Association. He recommended actions which would change its "literary character" to one which would foster opportunities for Sheboygan's business men to meet and develop plans "for the advancement of the general interests of the city."[29]

As a matter of fact the Association's Articles of Incorporation contain nothing which can be construed as authorizing it to become a center for the conspiracies of businessmen. Elwell, however, was one of the group which provided leadership to the Association, which also included Dr. Harry Barrett, Thomas Blackstock, George End, J.H. Plath, John M. Kohler, James Mead, and William Seaman; and these were among the most prominent business and professional men in the city. They were among the principal stockholders in the Association, and their involvement was critical, for only stockholders could be members. During the winter of 1883-1884 their activity in the Association was less apparent than previously, and program activity declined. During the spring of 1884 most of this group were prominent in an effort to organize a Sheboygan Business Men's Association. It was another fifteen months in getting established, presumably because the promoters and leading members were busy with other concerns. The Library Association was not one of them. The 1884 annual meeting was not held until December, if then. The first program meeting of the year did not take place until 27 February 1885. The Sheboygan County News' report of that meeting also carried a complaint about the neglect the Association was suffering. In the next two months a group of young people began an effort to reorganize the collection, take measures to pay the Association's bills, and to secure funds for a large purchase of new books. They worked quickly. In the 16 May issue the Sheboygan Times speculated that the group would want to acquire as much of the Association's stock as possible, and at least enough for control. The Times supported that idea, and editorialized its hopes that the stockholders would relinquish their holdings on terms favorable to the young people. After those hopes were set in type, but before publication of the issue, fresh news had to be added: a majority of the stockholders had agreed to transfer their stock to the group which proposed reorganization of the Association. The offer had been accepted, and the new stockholders had met, elected officers, and appointed committees.[30]

A few days later the County News reported continued progress in the reorganization, and urged generous public support for it, as without the efforts of the new Association the city would be without a public library, and thereby in disgrace. Disgrace was averted, but the Association's revival was of brief duration. The business man also were busy at organizing their Association, and by September 1885 they were engaged in a search for quarters. Believing that the only suitable rooms were those of the Library Association, the Business Men conferred with the young men of the Library Association, and, " . . . the whole affair, hall, reading room, piano and books are turned over to the Business Men's Association." The County News was guardedly hopeful about this development, stating that the Library Association was not dead, by simply merged, and would continue to operate. The Times was more sanguine: "This is a movement in the right direction."[31]

In fact the Library Association died there and then. The Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Sheboygan Business Men's Association make no mention of the Library

Association nor of the library. Only scant recognition of the Library Association was given in the business meeting of the Business Man's Association: the young men "having in charge" the library and rooms were to be allowed their use as members of the Business Man's Association without payment of the ten dollar "membership admission fee." Within a few months the Business Men's Association was moribund, and the library was locked away in a bank building. The transaction in September 1885 had been, said the Sheboygan County News, "an evil hour for the citizens of Sheboygan." How many others thought so is debatable: but Sheboygan remained without any sort of library for four more years, and without a public library until after the turn of the century.[32]

The inability of library associations to maintain themselves in Wisconsin after about 1875 may have been the stimulus to the implementation of the Public Library Act of 1872, but in general it is inaccurate to speak of a transition from library associations to public libraries. Most associations simply expired, and there was little or no continuity between the end of an association and the subsequent establishment of a public library in the same municipality. In a few cases other associations were organized, usually to the same ends. In even fewer cases local philanthropists intervened with the effect of preventing the loss of library facilities. Former Governor C.C. Washburne provided the most notable example of this in 1888, when he bequeathed $50,000 for a public library in La Crosse. A struggling association was thereby permitted to close out its career with a graceful and magnanimous gesture. The Young Men's Library Association turned its books and building fund over to the new public library. Two Associations, the Mabel Tainter Memorial Library Association in Menomonie and the Vaughn Library Association in Ashland, actually were endowed trusts, with self-perpetuating trustees. One Association survived at least until the middle years of the twentieth century, and continued to operate a "library." The Howard Library Association of Gilmanton, however, cannot be described in terms which define a modern public library. It had no quarters and no staff. Books in its collection were rented out by auction to the highest bidder, at quarterly meetings which actually were membership festivals, complete with picnics and pot-luck suppers. Social values more or less irrelevant to the library itself must have been the base of the Association's long existence.[33]

For many associations their objective became the establishment of free public libraries which could be put into operation and then turned over to municipalities for maintenance at public expense. Such associations were organized in Sparta in 1874, Janesville in 1882, Beaver Dam in 1884, Jefferson and Two Rivers in 1890, Kenosha and New London in 1895, Baraboo in 1895 and again in 1897, and Reedsburg in 1898. The foregoing list is not exhaustive but, as the chronology indicates, the pace of such activity quickened in the 1890's, and continued unabated into the early years of this century. From about 1885 until the Carnegie grants became available this was almost the only method of public library establishment in the State. This kind of effort resulted in significant changes in the nature of the associations.

The most significant change was a reduction in their ethnocentrism, and it was seldom made explicit, but demonstrated in other ways. In Janesville during November 1882 the Library Association began a house-to-house canvass of the city for contributions to the library fund. The Two Rivers (later, Joseph Mann) and Baraboo Library Associations undertook such canvasses in 1892 and 1895. A more overt kind of demonstration occurred in Baraboo in 1897, when Miss Emma Gattiker was elected to the Board of the Baraboo Public Library Association, an indication that the German element in the city was being accepted into the activities of the New England elite.[34]

The matter of the associations' ethnocentrism deserves some additional comment. There is not evidence on which to base a statement that the associations discriminated on ethnic grounds in their acceptance of members, but they ignored if they did not reject their non English speaking fellow residents. It was not until the associations became concerned with winning acceptance of public libraries that they attempted such efforts as house-to-house canvasses. The few surviving library association catalogs are even more revealing. By the end of the Civil War nearly every Wisconsin city contained significant numbers of non-English speaking people, but the catalog of the libraries list no works in their languages. For example, there are no German language works in the 1865 catalog of the Janesville Young Men's Association. In Milwaukee the matter became a subject for discussion within the Young Men's Association in 1863. The outgoing President spoke about the desirability of adding German language newspapers to the collection, as a means of attracting German-Americans to membership. In support of his proposal he cited the number of German language newspapers in the city - - the same as English language newspapers, and with about the same total number of readers. He asserted also that there was about the same occupational mix in the two groups, and that the Germans were no less attentive to the values of reading. The Association took no action on the recommendation, and the suggestion was not repeated for five years, when another President made an almost identical plea. Again, the Association did not respond, but the officers did act informally, and a few German titles appeared in the 1868 catalog of the library. Nevertheless, the character of membership in the Association remained essentially the same as before the Civil War. In Oshkosh the matter of appealing to the German-American element in the city does not seem to have occurred to Library Association leaders. In 1895, however, the promoters of the Public Library made several direct appeals to the German-Americans. Despite all this prima facie evidence, the matter does need further study.[35]

Those associations which were organized to promote the establishment of municipal public libraries demonstrated another significant difference from the older ones. In the new there were few attempts to serve also as educational organizations. The "moral and mental improvement" of their members were of no concern, except as the hoped for libraries would provide the opportunities for self-improvement. The meetings of the new associations became public rituals designed to influence actions. The program activities of several older associations have been described; the intellectual and communal adventures contained in them were not for the new associations. They tended very strongly to focus their efforts solely on promotional activities. Until the last decade in the century the usual practice in this sort of promotion was to find library advocates among local leading citizens; but as early as 1875 Professor James Davie Butler of the University of Wisconsin was presenting his lecture, "Libraries as Leaven," in various places around the State. After the organization of the Wisconsin Library Association and the Free Library Commission their leaders became available for similar purposes. Frank Hutchins, Lutie Stearns, and Reuben Gold Thwaites were the officials most active in public library promotion. In 1896 the Wisconsin Library Association held its annual meeting in Racine specifically to assist the Racine Library Association in its attempt to establish a public library.[36]

Such changes in library associations did not occur at a steady pace all around the State. Here and there people continued to organize library associations akin to the earlier ones. However, these new associations were intended to support something less than public libraries for entire municipalities. In Superior in 1891, for example, the Swedish Young People's Society established what they called a "public library of Swedish literature," but it was housed in the Swedish Lutheran Church. In Sheboygan in 1897 the Marquette Library Association was organized as a sort of Catholic Young Men's Association. The person most prominent in its establishment was Alderman Thomas H. Lynch, who was at the same time leading an effort to have the City Council establish a Sheboygan Public Library. The era of the library association was all but over. Early in the twentieth century their decline became a matter of comment by Frank Hutchins, to the effect that there was a noticeably increasing tendency to dispense with the formation of a library association and proceed directly to the establishment of a public library.[37]

Wisconsin's Public Library Act specified the form of the public library, but the institution did not become fixed for nearly three decades. As has been related, the Legislature engaged in a considerable amount of *ad hoc* tinkering with the Act during 1872-1895; and systematic development of it did not begin until the Free Library Commission was created in the latter year. The circumstances in which the Act was passed, the lack of public discussion of it, and the slowness with which it was implemented, all lend credence to a belief that it was a tentative measure. It was ignored for three years after passage, and in the first two decades under the Act only fourteen public libraries were established, not all of them in accordance with it: in Sparta in 1874, Madison and Eau Claire in 1875, Fond du Lac and Menomonie in 1876, Milwaukee in 1878, Janesville in 1883, Neenah in 1884, Beaver Dam in 1885, La Crosse and Superior in 1888, Green Bay and Wisconsin Rapids in 1889, and Merrill in 1890.

In Green Bay, La Crosse, Merrill and Wisconsin Rapids effective establishment of the libraries was accomplished by philanthropists. In several other localities public library establishment occurred in contravention of the letter of the Act, at least.

The Janesville experience in 1872 was not the end of attempting to fund public libraries with liquor license fees. Twenty-five years later the Sheboygan City Council established a public library on the same basis. On 12 February

1897 the will of James Mead, a former President of the Sheboygan Library Association, had been made public. He bequeathed twenty thousand dollars endowment to a public library if the city were to establish one. Other than in its financial provisions the Sheboygan Library Ordinance was quite similar to the Public Library Act.[38]

The Act was ignored also in several other places in the State during the first twenty-five years it was in effect. In Menomonie in 1876 and Viroqua in 1898 public libraries were established by simple appropriation from the cities' general funds: six hundred dollars in Menomonie, and seven hundred and fifty in Viroqua. No special taxes were levied, and there were not library elections in either place. However, library boards were appointed in both.[39]

In two cities public libraries were established by contracts with library associations already in operation. In Two Rivers in 1893 the Mann Library Association deeded all its property to the City, to be maintained as a public library. The terms of the contract allowed the Library Association to name the members of the Library Board, subject to approval by the City Council. The contract also required the City to levy an annual tax of not more than one mill per dollar of assessed valuation, but sufficient to raise at least five hundred dollars a year for the library, and the City was to maintain the library "indefinitely." In 1896 the City of Ripon leased the property of the Ripon Library

Association, for twenty-five years at a rental of one dollar a year. When the lease expired the property of the Association would pass to the City. One clause in the contract provided that if the City failed to "suitably maintain" the library the Association might terminate the contract; another protected the City against capricious contract termination by the Association.[40]

Such experimentation was strongly idiosyncratic in nature, probably in response to purely local conditions. In Two Rivers, for example, the Mann Library Association was in precarious financial condition early in 1892, with income of nearly four hundred dollars short of expenses. The Directors issued a somewhat peremptory demand for city payment of the library's expenses. The Council submitted the question to the voters, who rejected the demand. In the fall of 1892 the Association made public its intention to turn the library over to the City, and in November the voters accepted the proposal which culminated in the contract between the City and the Association.[41]

The circumstances in which other public libraries were established make apparent how uneven was the application of the Public Library Act. Milwaukee was a special case; the city was the stepchild of the Legislature, and establishment of the Milwaukee Public Library required direct intervention by that body. The remaining ones were variously established in ways that seem to have made implementation of the statute almost a matter of whim. In Sparta in May 1874 the Library Association petitioned the Village Board for an appropriation. The Board agreed to a sum of one hundred dollars for books. Then, in unpublicized negotiations with the Board the Association agreed to turn its Reading Room over to the Village. The Village President appointed trustees; the nine Directors of the Sparta Library Association. In Madison, the Cith Council passed a public library ordinance, under suspension of the rules, on 21 November 1874; prior to passage of the ordinance there was no public discussion of the measure. The Eau Claire City Library was established by City Council resolution on 16 June 1875. There is considerable confusion in the available record, and it appears that although the City owned the library the Library Association ran it, on funds appropriated by the Council. The three officers of the Library Association held the same offices on the Library Board. In Minomonie in 1876 the voters of the Town appropriated five hundred dollars to the Library Association, at the annual Town Meeting, but did not bother to elect the Town Library Board, an oversight which left eht Town Supervisors as the de jure Board, and the Library Association Directors in charge in fact. No one cared:

> . . . the town election passed off quietly, and with the best of feeling . . . there being neither party politics nor any other issue to make it interesting.

The library appropriation was reported almost as an afterthought. Fond du Lac, also in 1876, was the first place to follow due process in the establishment of a public library. In October the Neocosmian Society and the Young Men's Association offered their libraries to the city if a public library were to be established. The City Council set a referendum on the matter, and the people approved, 1258 - 151. The Council promptly created the library.[42]

The changing nature of the library associations may be perceived most clearly from events in Janesville in 1882/1883, and in Beaver Dam in 1884/1885. In Janesville the establishment of the public library came as an anticlimax to the bankruptcy of the Young Men's Association and the rescue of its library by the Janesville Library Association and Colonel Robbins. The latter organization was formed expressly for the purpose of getting a public library in Janesville, and after seven months of alarms and exhortations the voters of the City approved the library, 1209 - 39. In Beaver Dam the Library Association was organized to establish a free library and demonstrate its feasibility, in the belief that otherwise the voters would defeat a public library proposal. The library was opened 29 November 1884; only four months later its transfer to the City was approved by the electorate.[43]

The transition from library associations to public libraries was not a coherent process. It occurred over a period of three decades, 1870 - 1900, in a great variety of local circumstances. In some communities the decline and disappearance of a library association was not a stimulus to action for a public library; in others it was. In general the weakening reliance upon associations was not noticed until that part of the public library movement was past. The changing nature of the associations either was not appreciated by those who lived through the changes, as was the case with relatively large numbers of association leaders in such places as Baraboo and Sheboygan, or was accepted without comment. In other places, such as Fond du Lac, Madison and Milwaukee the change from association to public libraries occurred in circumstances which operated to obscure the decline of the associations: the transition was presented as a voluntary surrender of property for the betterment of the city.

During approximately the same time span the rise of the public library was an equally haphazard process. In most cases of public library establishment before 1895 the events evoked little comment or emulation elsewhere. The Public Library Act was only slowly accepted as a standard for public library establishment. Even more than two decades afterwards a number of cities and other jurisdictions continued to experiment with other forms of public library organization. Even so, during the last decade and a half of the century the public library movement was transformed by developments within and outside the State.

Chapter 6

The Transformation of the Public Library Movement in Wisconsin

The shift from association libraries to public libraries resulted from a number of factors which transformed the library movement in the State. Chief among them were the following: the example of philanthropy, which provided reinforcement to the movement, but was not a primary influence; the establishment of the profession of librarianship in Wisconsin, which furnished a leadership cadre for the movement; the establishment of a State agency for the promotion of public libraries, which gave a large measure of political legitimacy to the movement; and finally, the thrust of the public library movement into local politics, which fully legitimated the institution.

These factors were in themselves of varying significance, and it is not possible to determine precise measures of it. Cause and effect may not be argued for any of them; by the end of the century the libraries and other agencies were there, and their very existence contributed to the cycle of development in the public library movement in Wisconsin.

In a sense it is futile to seek causation in these matters. During the final fifteen years of the nineteenth century the public library movement went through a rapid process of maturation and transformation, but the institution itself was not much affected. The public libraries established in Reedsburg in 1898 or Columbus in 1901 do not appear to have been substantively different from those established in Madison and Fond du Lac in 1875 and 1876, nor from those established by the library associations in Milwaukee in 1847 and Waupun in 1858, even though there were marked differences among those municipalities. Substantive differences among public libraries began to appear after their establishment as the municipalities in which they were established developed differently. What appears to have happened in the public library movement in Wisconsin, 1885 - 1900, was that it coalesced into a reasonably coherent system for promoting the establishment of public libraries. The coalescence occurred in a context; a sequence of events can be described, and some relationships can be established.

The development toward the public library in Wisconsin was well under way before philanthropy became a significant element in it. Philanthropy on a large scale did not occur until well after the Civil War. Also, there never did develop in the State any systematic effort to exploit philanthropic spirit in behalf of public libraries. Even the fabulous gifts of Andrew Carnegie were sought solely as a result of local initiative. Nevertheless, for a time the generosity of the wealthy was an important factor in the provision of public libraries in Wisconsin.

The plain facts of the nineteenth century library philanthropy in Wisconsin are simple: during the last third of the century residents or former residents of the State gave or bequeathed more than $900,000 to found or maintain public libraries. That raw figure includes only cash gifts or property appraised in dollar values. It is a conservative estimate, including only those gifts someone thought worthy of a public record.[1] It does not include cash paid as a consideration - - for subscription fees or stock purchases in a library association - - although such payments do appear to have been considered a kind of philanthropy in at least some instances.

Behind these simple facts, however, is a confused and often contradictory record. In some communities the philanthropic gifts of local rich men arrived at opportune times, but it cannot be said that without them there would have been no public libraries in those places. Nor does it appear that the vitality of a statewide movement was affected by their gifts. As the century closed those people of Wisconsin who wanted public libraries had found a way to get them, and their movement was going to succeed without reference to the generosity of potential benefactors. As Shera found for New England, philanthropy was not a causative factor in the development of the public library in Wicsonsin.[2]

Throughout the century business man were urged continuously to demonstrate their "public spirit" or loyalty to their communities by supporting library associations (and other organizations) at some level beyond the cost of a subscription or share of stock in the venture; and they responded, one assumes, to the extent they thought to be reasonable. Often enough this response was indeed generous, as when Colonel Burr Robbins of Janesville gave a benefit performance of his circus for the Janesville Library Association.[3] This sort of philanthropic service remained a relatively significant factor in the public library movement, but soon it came to be greatly overshadowed by the very large gifts for public libraries which began to be made early in the 1880's. Between 1882 and 1900 fourteen individuals made or announced large scale gifts to or for public libraries in their home communities. The donors and the amounts they gave were: Andrew G. Tainter (Menomonie), $190,000; Zalmon G. Simmons (Kenosha), $170,000; Mrs. Marshall Harris (Oshkosh), $75,000; Mrs. Samuel S. Vaughn (Ashland), $75,000; Cadwallader C. Washburne (La Crosse), $50,000: Elisha D. Smith (Menasha), $32,000; John J. Willimas (Beaver Dam), $30,000; Isaac Stephenson (Marinette), $30,000; Philetus Sawyer (Oshkosh), $25,000; James Mead (Sheboygan), $20,000; Rufus Kellog (Green Bay), $15,000; D.R.Moon (Stanley), $12,000; Mrs. Caroline Metcalfe (Milwaukee), $10,000; Thomas B. Scott (Merrill), $10,000 and also $5,000 to Wisconsin Rapids, and J.D. Witter (Wisconsin Rapids), $10,000. The total of these gifts was $759,000. Thirty nine other persons gave amounts ranging from one thousand to eight thousand dollars to make the amount referred to earlier. To lend a better perspective to the matter it should be noted that Andrew Carnegie's sixty gifts to Wisconsin libraries amounted to $1,045,511.[4]

The most striking aspect of these gifts is a negative one, and relates to the Carnegie Gifts. Carnegie hoped his grants would stimulate other rich men to a similar philanthropy. Therefore, although the matter is somewhat outside the scope of this work, it is necessary to devote some attention to it. After Carnegie began his "wholesale" giving in 1901 gifts to libraries by wealthy Wisconsin residents began to decline markedly. Indeed, gifts on the scale of those by Tainter, Simmons, Harris and Vaughn have not occurred in the twentieth century. At the time, however, the Free Library Commission took special note of the "strong and growing interests of thoughtful philanthropists." They saluted Carnegie for the successful working of his plan to prompt local philanthropy by the example of his gifts, and announced that giving to libraries in Wisconsin had now reached such a high level the Commission would no longer report gifts under five hundred dollars. They reported $692,000 in gifts during the biennium 1 July 1900 to 30 June 1902: $467,000 from Carnegie and $225,000 from Wisconsin residents. In its Fifth Report (1902 - 1904) the Commission announced, under the heading, "Some Notable Gifts," $212,850 in Carnegie grants and $55,485.99 from Wisconsin residents.

The Sixth Report included, under the same heading, grants and gifts of $87,500 and $23,150 respectively; by this time, however, as little as one hundred dollars was considered a notable gift. The gap between the Carnegie grants and others continued to widen.[5]

With the exception of Mrs. Metcalfe's, which was for books on the fine arts, these large scale gifts were all to be used for buildings as well as collections. In addition, the sums given included endowment funds for libraries in all but three places: Green Bay, Marinette and Milwaukee.

The municipalities which received these gifts were a diverse group. All but three of them were organized as cities, but that was almost their only common feature. Milwaukee, the State's metropolis, was in a class by itself, with a population of 285,000 in 1900. It was ten times as large as La Crosse and Oshkosh. Both of the latter were small industrial cities whose prosperity depended strongly upon the immense but rapidly disappearing pine stands of central and northern Wisconsin. La Crosse, on the Mississippi River, was in the commercial and financial orbit of Minneapolis, one hundred and fifty miles up-river. Oshkosh, on the Fox River of Wisconsin, had close ties with the other industrial cities of the Fox Valley, but still was in the commercial and financial orbit of Milwaukee, one hundred miles to the southeast. Sheboygan, a small industrial city on Lake Michigan, was in a similar relationship to Milwaukee.

Marinette, with a 1900 population of 16,000, was a twin city of Menomonie, Michigan; the two cites were then the most important industrial complex in the Upper Peninsula region. Kenosha in 1900 was a manufacturing, commercial and shipping center of 11,600 persons, approximately half-way between Chicago and Milwaukee. Five communities, Ashland, Green Bay, Menasha, Menomonie and Merrill, were in the five to ten thousand population range at the time their libraries were given to them. Production and shipment of raw materials were the most important activities for three of them: lumber in the case of Menomonie and Merrill, and lumber and iron ore from the Lake Superior port of Ashland. Paper and other wood products manufacturing were the principal economic activities of Green Bay and Menasha, and shipping also was important to Green Bay. Furniture and other light manufacturing and shipbuilding were the mainstays of the Sheboygan economy. Three of the municipalities were organized as villages: Beaver Dam, with an 1890 population of 4,222; Stanley, with 2,387 people in 1900; and Wisconsin Rapids, with 1,702 people in 1890. Each was primarily a small trading center for its rural environs. Green Bay was the oldest of all these municipalities, settled by French-Canadians in the seventeenth century; Stanley was the youngest, its corporate existence having begun in 1894. As for the others, less than half a century separated the oldest from the youngest. This sketchy description of these places serves only to give a general view of them. The fact of the gifts they received cannot be explained by their economic, political or social characteristics. Each donation appears to have been strongly idiosyncratic in its origins.

All these large gifts came during the last two decades of the century, at a time when the public library movement was in such a profound state of transition from the social library to the municipally supported free library, as the library promoters in the State lost confidence in the viability of the library associations. Among this group of philanthropists there was a substantial level of experience with the library associations. The Messrs. Kellogg, Mead, Sawyer, Simmons, Smith, Washburne and Williams all had been officers in library associations or close associates of persons who were involved with libraries. Mrs. Vaughn and Mrs. Harris were widows of men who had been presidents of the library associations in Ashland and Oshkosh. (Andrew Tainter of Menomonie does not appear to have been involved with library associations, but he was a partner in Knapp, Stout and Company, and James Stout had a strong interest in educational philanthropy. The Tainter gift actually established a community center which included a free library.) This group knew as well as anyone in the library movement the difficulties of maintaining library associations. It is uncertain whether the donors thought of themselves as consciously contributing to a transition. Their gifts, however, resulted in the establishment of libraries which may well have served as models for other places in Wisconsin. It is certain that the Washburne Free Public Library in La Crosse was a model for the Directors of the Beaver Dam Public Library on the occasion of the Willimas gift. Mr. Williams and the Directors made an overnight visit to La Crosse to inspect the Washburne Library. They were sufficiently impressed to accept the example as one to be followed.[6] At this time no other library in Wisconsin was in quarters which had been designed for the purpose. Most public libraries, of either the association or the municipal sort, were garbed in hand-me-downs, and the idea of specially designed buildings was just beginning to be considered in the State. The Washburne Library building, for example, was patterned after the Coldwater, Michigan library, which was designed to specifications by William F. Poole, Director of the Newberry Library in Chicago.[7] The question of the philanthropists' influence in such matters is moot, but the evidence is suggestive.

As has been related the incidence of large scale gifts for libraries in Wisconsin declined greatly after the Carnegie program began. Whether he pre-empted the field is debatable; it does seem likely that the relative ease with which Carnegie grants were obtained led Wisconsin's public uncertainty about the reliability of philanthropy as a source of support for the establishment and maintenance of public libraries.

There is evidence that among Americans in general philanthropy has been suspect as a method of meeting public needs, especially since the Jacksonian era.[8] If such attitudes were general in Wisconsin the record is unclear, and with reference to libraries in particular the residents of Wisconsin were virtually mute on the subject, at least until late in the nineteenth century. In 1890 the Oshkosh Daily Northwestern repeatedly warned the people of Oshkosh (ironically, in the light of subsequent events) that they could not depend on the philanthropy or public spirit of the city's wealthy men; that the only reliable support was to tax themselves for libraries. Private support, it was emphasized, had been tried there and did not work; enthusiasm would sustain a small institution for a while, but ultimately it would be left hanging . . . . Colonel Gabriel Bouck disagreed, but no one else disputed the Northwestern.[9] At about the same time the Fort Atkinson Jefferson County Union was advising its readers that as there was no Carnegie in town the city would have to provide its own library. On the other hand, in 1894, Charles Bacon, the Librarian of Beloit College, was advocating a public library for Beloit founded and supported by generous citizens, and also managed and operated by public spirited residents, "of which Beloit is blessed with many."[10] Increasingly, though, the generality of opinion on the subject seems to have been one of pessimism about the prospect of having a library given to the community, plus a bit of plain, old-fashioned moralizing on the values of a library for which one has suffered. The Baraboo Evening News told its readers that libraries which are given to communities are not the best:[11]

> The library that grows out of the sacrifices of the people - - the one which they unitedly labor for - - is the most popular and efficient . . . . A public library in Baraboo founded by the liberality of one man would not start so freighted with hope and prayers as one enriched by the sacrifices of five hundred families.

In Kenosha G.W. Johnston told his fellow members of the Kenosha Public Library Association the history of the Fond du Lac Public Library, and concluded that if the library promoters there had waited for a gift from the wealthy they would not yet have a public library. The Kenosha Evening News echoed his injunction not to wait for some great gift which was not then in prospect and might never come. In 1896 Lutie Stearns, Secretary of the Free Library Commission, gave official sanction to the remarks of the Baraboo Evening News, in almost identical terms. Her message was that if the people establish and support through their own struggles a library for the community, then they will deserve the support of the wealthy and generous men of the community, and it would come, as did that of John J. Willams in Beaver Dam.[12] These last were the words of a professional librarian, one of the few beginning to assume control of the public library movement in the State. As was indicated a few years later by their enthusiastic response to the Carnegie endowments, the librarians were not antiphilanthropy; they were concerned for the regularization of support for public libraries.

Although the basic organization of the public library was established in law, and the philanthopically founded libraries were furnishing models for the State the public library movement in Wisconsin was in 1890 still an ill-formed trend. The library interests in the State were localized, unorganized, and communicating with each other through channels that were as much fortuitous as anything else. The library promoters in Wisconsin lacked an agency for coordinating their activities. Indeed, there is little evidence that such an agency was desired; the agencies which came into being to serve that purpose came unsought in Ashland and La Crosse, in Beloit and Sheboygan. The library promoters there and in other places around the State do not appear to have had any concept about the centralization of library effort. The impetus for such agencies came from librarians who were beginning to perceive in their professionalism a community that was not perceived by the handful of "directors" of public libraries in Wisconsin in 1890.

In Wisconsin the first notice of librarianship appeared in the Milwaukee Evening Wisconsin of 5 September 1853. It was a partial reprint of the call for the 1853 Conference of

Librarians, with some editorial comment in the story head: "A Convention of Librarians - - a New Feature in Literary Matters." At that time there was only one salaried librarian in the State, at the Wisconsin State Library, the law library for the Wisconsin Supreme Court and the Legislature. Twenty-three years later, when the American Library Association was founded, the Wisconsin State Librarian still did not have enough colleagues to crowd his office, and there were in Wisconsin no members of the new Association. Klaus Linderfelt, then Librarian of the Milwaukee Public Library, became the first Wisconsin member of the American Library Association, in 1880.[13] By 1885 there were a handful of A.L.A. members in Wisconsin, and at its Lake George Conference that year Linderfelt invited A.L.A. to meet in Milwaukee in 1886. Twenty-eight Wisconsin librarians attended the Milwaukee Conference, and the A.L.A. gained eight new members from the State. There were now about a dozen in Wisconsin, and there matters rested for the next four years.[14]

The American Library Association members in Wisconsin took the lead in organizing the Wisconsin Library Association. Five members from Madison and Milwaukee appear to have been the key group: Rueben Gold Thwaites, Isaac S. Bradley, and Minnie M. Oakley, all of the State Historical Society in Madison; and Klaus Linderfelt and Theresa West, of the Milwaukee Public Library. From them came the decision to try for a State library association. 11 February 1891 was the was the date selected for an organizational meeting to be held in Madison.[15]

It was a diverse group which assembled on the 11th. In addition to those previously named there were: Edward A. Birge (Professor of Zoology, University of Wisconsin, and member of the Madison Library Board), John C. Freeman (Professor of English Literature, University of Wisconsin), Lorenzo D. Harvey (President, State Normal School, Milwaukee), Charles A. Hutchins (Assistant State Superintendent of Public Instruction), Frank A. Hutchins (nephew of Charles, and Town Library Clerk in the State Department of Public Instruction), Oliver E. Wells (State Superintendent of Public Instruction) and A. O. Wright (Secretary, State Board of Control, now the State Department of Public Welfare).[16]

The business of the meeting began with the selection of Thwaites as Chairman and Frank Hutchins as Secretary, but the main purpose of the meeting was to decide whether a Wisconsin Library Association should be organized. There does not seem to have been any opposition to the idea, and the group proceeded with their work. After some discussion a constitution was adopted, and temporary officers were elected: Klaus Linderfelt, President; Reuben Thwaites, Vice-President; and Frank Hutchins, Secretary-Treasurer. The meeting then adjourned.[17]

The Constitution was a close copy of the one adopted by the New York State Library Association: its provisions are as follows:

> 1. Name. This Association shall be called the Wisconsin State Library Association.
>
> 2. Object. Its object shall be to promote the library interests of the State of Wisconsin.
>
> 3. Members. Any person interested in promoting the object of the Association may become a member by vote of the Executive Board and payment to the Treasurer of the annual assessment.
>
> 4. Officers. The officers of the Association shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary and a Treasurer, to be elected by ballot at the annual meeting. The President, First Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer shall constitute the Executive Board, which shall have the power to act for the Association in intervals between its meetings.
>
> 5. Meetings. The Association shall hold annual meetings at such times and places as the Executive Board may designate. The Executive Board may also call other meetings and fix the times and places.
>
> 6. Dues and Debts. The annual assessment shall be fifty cents. No officer, committee or member of the Association shall incur any debt in its name, nor shall the Treasurer make any payment, unless authorized by specific vote of the Executive Board.
>
> 7. Amendments. This Constitution may be amended by three-fourths vote of those present at any stated meeting, notice of the proposed change having been given in the call for the meeting.

As can be seen, it was a simple and direct charter. Nearly all authority to act was lodged in the Executive Board, and the membership was given little opportunity to work its will against that of the Executive Board.[18]

Sometime after the organizational meeting the notice of the first annual meeting was sent to interested parties around the State. What appears to have been the earliest public notice of the meeting was in the 9 March 1891 issue of the Madison Wisconsin State Journal; it contained an announcement of the time and place for the meeting, a list of speakers, a forecast of good attendance by Wisconsin's "library workers," and an invitation to anyone interested in the advancement of library interests in Wisconsin. A somewhat different notice appeared in the March 1891 issue of Library Journal. It began with a brief report of the 11 February meeting, and included the same general invitation to interested citizens. The notice also included a more explicit statement of purposes for the Association: to help in the establishment of new libraries and in the improvement of existing ones. Teachers and school officers were especially requested to attend. One thing is apparent from both notices: the organizers of the Wisconsin Library Association did not have in mind the development of a purely professional association. They considered themselves as promoters of libraries, and were anxious to develop a broadly based organization.

That attitude also is apparent in the record of the first annual meeting of the Wisconsin Library Association. Twenty-nine persons attended, representing most of the significant libraries in the State: the State Historical Society, the Milwaukee Public Library, and the University Library. A number of other libraries were represented by librarians, trustees, or both: the public libraries of

Beaver Dam, Eau Claire, Green Bay, La Crosse and Madison. Also in attendance were President Chamberlain of the University, President Salisbury from the Whitewater State Normal School, the State Inspector of High Schools, and a representative from A.C.McClurg & Company.[19]

Reports of the meeting vary. Lutie Stearns, who was not there, has written that it was devoted to "practical questions on management of public libraries, arousing library interest, etc."[20] Her brief account is somewhat at variance from newspaper reports of the event. Klaus Linderfelt led off with a review of library development in Wisconsin, to the point that although the State was strong in large reference libraries it was much behind surrounding states in the matter of free public libraries. He thought the Association could do effective missionary work in this field. The order of appearance by other participants is uncertain. Professor Birge spoke informally on how to conduct free libraries "to make them productive of the most good;" his remarks provoked a "spirited debate on practical library management." Frank Hutchins delivered a critique of town school libraries. He was disturbed by their scarcity and condition: only 25 per cent of the town school districts had libraries, and Hutchins thought those were badly managed. He also spoke on how to establish public sentiment for libraries.[21] In an evening session Reuben Gold Thwaites gave what was perhaps his favorite speech:

one to the effect that public libraries should do a better job in collecting and preserving the materials for local history. W.D.Parker, State Inspector of High Schools, urged the Association to work at improving high school libraries. All in all, it was more of a missionary meeting than a professional program. The meeting concluded with the election of officers: Klaus Linderfelt, President; Reuben Thwaites, Vice President; and Frank Hutchins, Secretary-Treasurer.[22]

The Association very nearly died in its infancy. On 28 April 1892 President Linderfelt was arrested for embezzlement of funds from the Milwaukee Public Library. The story needs no repetition here, but the news precipitated a crisis in the Wisconsin Library Association. In October of 1891 Linderfelt had been elected also to the Presidency of the American Library Association. The news of his crime, coming on the eve of the conventions of both organizations, cast a pall over them. The A.L.A. allowed Linderfelt to submit his resignation effective on the date of his election. The Wisconsin Association, "without machinery or heart for such decisive action," not only was left leaderless, but without even spirit enough to meet in 1892.[23]

In fact, the Association was moribund for two years, for the 1893 meeting was only a brief social gathering at Chicago, just before the World Congress of Librarians on 13 July. Only about a dozen persons attended this reunion. Nevertheless, that meeting was a step forward. To call it it had been necessary for Thwaites to assume the Presidency of the remnants of the Association. At that gathering, presumably, he undertook some discussion of the group's revival. Even so, planning the organization's renewal must have involved some difficulties, for the next meeting did not come about until 4 July 1894.

The group who founded the Association had on occasion talked bouyantly of the "library sentiment" in Wisconsin, and one can imagine that the 1894 conference was a severe test of their faith in that sentiment. Only fifteen persons attended the conference, which was in Beaver Dam. Of those fifteen, one was a trustee of the Williams Public Library there, one was the Beaver Dam Librarian, one was a librarian from Michigan, on temporary assignment in Beaver Dam, and one, who may well have been the most disappointed of all, was the representative from A.C.McClurg and Company. Thwaites, the acting President, could not be at the meeting, and Theresa West of Milwaukee presided. Those present consoled themselves about the low attendance by attributing it to the national railroad strike then in progress. The only published report of the program contains some evidence that the Association's members may have been still unsure of themselves, still somewhat unsettled by the Linderfelt affair.[24] Despite its few numbers the Association did important work on that Independence Day in 1894. It elected Frank Hutchins President and Lutie E. Stearns Secretary-

Treasurer. They would remain in office until 1897, and they would dominate librarianship in Wisconsin for the next decade. Along with Senator James Stout they would turn an erratic movement into a surer path of achievement. Something more than passing attention should be given them at this point.

Frank Avery Hutchins was born in 1851, in Norwalk, Ohio, into a New England family of teachers. His parents brought him to Wisconsin in 1854, when his father became President of Wayland Academy, in Beaver Dam. Frank was educated in the Academy and Beloit College. After two years in the latter institution he dropped out, owing to poor health. He spent the next eleven years in recuperation and a variety of occupations, which included teaching and bookselling. In 1884 he became publisher and co-editor of the Beaver Dam _Argus_. He was one of the organizers of the Beaver Dam Library Association in 1884, and was elected Secretary. When the Beaver Dam Public Library was established in 1885 Hutchins was appointed to the Board, and elected Secretary. He held this position until he moved to Madison in 1895.

During his tenure on the _Argus_ Hutchins was a strong supporter of the public library in Beaver Dam. The call for the first meeting of the Beaver Dam Library Association reveals the intensity of his feelings on the subject:[25]

> Don't wait for a formal invitation from anybody, but go after your neighbors and bring them. Don't let everybody's business be nobody's business this

> time. This public good will require work - - active work - - your work - - my work. Don't sit down and wait for others to attend to this duty. Come yourself and do your duty.

Hutchins was the central figure in the development of the Beaver Dam Public Library until the Williams gift was made in 1890, and his interest in public libraries deepened and drew him into librarianship. In February 1891 he took a position with the State Department of Public Instruction, as supervisor of town school libraries. Here he came into direct contact with the leaders of the nascent Wisconsin Library Association, among whom he soon became a dominant figure. Despite his official involvement with school libraries he continued to develop his interest in the public library movement in the State, and when the Free Library Commission was organized in 1895 he became its first Chairman. Upon reorganization of the Commission in 1897 Hutchins became Secretary and executive officer. Together with Miss Stearns and Senator Stout he led the public library movement in Wisconsin until ill health required his resignation from the Commission in 1904.

Hutchins' most noticeable character trait was his modesty. Lutie Stearns called him, "the most self-effacing man I have ever known." The Wisconsin State Journal said he gave of himself in "utter self-effacement." But at the same time she remarked his modesty Stearns said that of those men who had been a source of inspiration to her

Hutchins was the greatest; and the Madison Democrat testified to "his power of quietly and naturally communicating to other men . . . his enthusiasm for the doing of worthwhile thing."[26] He had a great variety of interests, and a superb ability to arouse in others an active concern for those interests. Among others, Charles McCarthy, Wisconsin's great Legislative Reference Librarian; Louis Reber, Dean of the University of Wisconsin Extension Division; the first State Forester of Wisconsin; and the President of the Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis Society have testified to the great influence Hutchins had on their work. He appears to have been one of the initiators of the early twentieth century surge of Progressivism that came to be known as the "Wisconsin idea." Perhaps the most eloquent summation of his life and career was in the eulogy by the Madison Democrat:[27]

> Other public servants are more faithful, more devoted, less easily discouraged for having associated with Frank Hutchins, and all over the State citizens who came in contact with him have nobler ideas of citizenship by reason of that contact.

The fostering of a nobler idea of citizenship was central to Hutchins' concern with public library development. It was a theme given frequent iteration in the Beaver Dam Argus during his career as publisher. Hutchins left a sparse record of his own beliefs about libraries, but that same theme is ever-present in his writings about them. He exalted the public library as a teacher of civic responsibility, without regard to party, creed or class.[28] In his desire to foster better citizenship Hutchins had an abiding concern for the intellectual and moral development of the children and young adults of the villages and hamlets of Wisconsin, places of up to about five hundred people. There were more than eight hundred such communities in the State, and Hutchins found them to be stagnant and lifeless. They were the recruiting grounds for tramps, and a threat to the peace and good order of the State: "In such communities demagogues, hare-brained theorists and vote buyers find their most fertile fields." In such communities the young men especially had "no incentive to gain the increasing breadth of view and knowledge necessary for a reasonable consideration of the complex questions" now confronting the people of the State. "Sodden with monotony," the young men of those places needed all the help the State could give, Hutchins told the Legislature, apparently in 1906, in support of a request for funds to strengthen the Free Library Commission's Traveling Library Department. The best help, he thought, was a library which the young could use for themselves.[29]

Hutchins liked to tell of four young men in Beaver Dam whose experience with the open shelves of its library led them into significant careers in engineering and science, and from that experience he drew the primary justification for the public library: "A good library, freely roamed, gives a reader glimpses of outlying opportunity that, more often than we know, arouse latent ambitions and capacities." To this end, Hutchins was the "spirited force in the Wisconsin library movement." He was no ordinary reformer; indeed, he did not want to reform the world. "What he did was to give rural Wisconsin the opportunity to better itself."[30]

Lutie Eugenia Stearns was born in Staughton, Massachusetts in 1867, where her father was practicing medicine. She came to Wisconsin with her parents in 1871, when her father became director of the Veterans' Hospital in Milwaukee. In 1886 she graduated from the Milwaukee State Normal School, and became a teacher in the public schools there. As a teacher she became well known for her use of the Milwaukee Public Library for supplementary reading for her pupils; and in 1888 the Library Board hired her as head of the Library's circulation department, with the mission to stimulate other teachers to make similar use of the Library. She gained a national reputation among teachers and librarians in this work. In 1891 she joined the Wisconsin Library Association; when Hutchins became its President in 1894 she replaced him as Secretary. On the creation of the Free Library Commission Stearns became its Secretary. On its reorganization in 1897 she became Librarian, and, later, Head of the Traveling Library Department, a post she held until 1914. In that year she resigned from the Commission, partly for personal reasons, partly over policy disagreements with its Secretary, Matthew Dudgeon.

Lutie Stearns was an effective complement to Frank Hutchins. His reserve and detachment were countered by her ebullience and passionate enthusiasm for the library cause. She claimed shyness, but when asked to dictate her reminiscences her response to the reporter was: "The story of my life? That would demand a mural."[31] Some unfortunate childhood experiences left her with a stammer all her life, but she would not let that problem keep her from doing the things she felt necessary: " . . . I felt that I had something to say that might be of help and I determined that my difficulty in speaking should not be an impediment."[32] Despite painful experiences with the stammer she worked out a number of strategems for covering up the difficulty. She was also an inspiring figure, especially able to attract young persons into careers in librarianship. One has mentioned the "awe and wonder" in which she - - then a girl of thirteen - - heard Miss Stearns "proclaim the gospel of the village library."[33]

The demands of his job, plus his reserve, kept Hutchins from full involvement in the role of library missionary, so it fell to Lutie Stearns to carry the message to the cities, villages and cross-roads communities of Wisconsin. Along with the message she carried the books of the traveling libraries:

> From 1895 through October 1914, I traveled thousands of miles in Wisconsin by stage, sleigh, buggy, wagon, passenger coach and caboose, wearing out five fur

> coats in succession in my efforts to reach all parts of the state. In taking traveling libraries to the rural districts . . . during the winter I would secure a black bearskin to wear over my fur-lined muskrat coat, which was inadequate for the frequent below zero weather. I would get a three-seated sleigh, remove the last two sears, and fill the space with books which I would locate in farmers' homes, rural post offices, schools and other available stations.

Surely, the lady deserved mink![34]

Her training as a teacher led Stearns into librarianship, training which had instilled a strong concern to cultivate to the best of her ability the abilities of her individual students. As with Hutchins, her primary interest in public libraries stemmed from what she saw as their potential value to children and young people, but especially to children, asserting that it is always through children that one can do the best work in upliftng any community.[35] Her concern for promoting the fullest development of the capacities of each child she attributed to her Normal School training, but a greater measure of it must have come from her own grade school experience: "I was naturally left-handed, but for the sake of contemptible conformity I was compelled to change over to the right hand in my writing." She believed this to be the source of her stammer.[36]

She had come to believe also that the public school, with its "surcharged curriculum" and overcrowded classrooms (she was talking about city schools; her first class in Milwaukee numbered 72 students) had necessarily to deal with children in the aggregate. The librarian was able to deal with the child as an individual.[37]

She agreed with Hutchins on the value of open stacks, but it was a highly qualified agreement; open stacks could prove disastrous if the librarian in charge of them were "immature and generally inefficient." In general she emphasized much more strongly than Hutchins the value of an alert, sympathetic and well trained librarian.[38]

James Huff Stout was born in 1848, and raised in the city where he was born, Dubuque, Iowa. His father was one of the lumber barons of the upper Mississippi Valley. In 1867, after a year at the University of Chicago, James entered Knapp, Stout and Company, and served in its offices in Minnesota and Missouri. In 1889 he assumed management of the Company's Red Cedar River operations, and settled in Menomonie, Wisconsin. Menomonie, which had been a booming lumbering center, by 1890 was a somnolent little city (population: 5,600), economically dependent on the agriculture of the surrounding countryside. James Stout's position in Knapp, Stout and Company assured him a leadership position in Menomonie and Dunn County. In 1894 he received the Republican nomination for State Senator, and won election handily. In the Senate he became Chairman of the Committee on Education, and served in that capacity for fourteen years. In 1909 he declined to stand for reelection. He died on 8 December 1910.

Stout also was a noticeably reserved man. The Wisconsin State Journal characterized him as "deliberate, self-controlled and free from affections . . . In some ways he is a silent man - - certainly one who shuns publicity and one who keeps his own counsel." Adele Maries Shaw found him silent to the point of reticence where his philanthropy was concerned, one who kept his benefactions hidden. She attributed his silence to a desire to direct attention to the work of the projects he aided rather than to himself.[39]

Stout's interest in education appears to have stemmed from an involvement that began in St. Louis, where he paid the private school tuition for the children of an employee. (His own children attended public schools.) It was a manual arts school, and he took some time to investigate what he was paying for. Apparently he liked what he found there, for his interest deepened, and after he arrived in Menomonie he lost little time in acting upon it. In 1890 he proposed to the Menomonie School Board that he would build and equip a manual training department, and pay its operating expenses for three terms, if the Board would then take it over.[40] The offer was accepted almost instantly, which in itself says much about Stout's position in the community. By 1903 what had been the manual training department of the high school was the Stout Institute for the preparation of manual arts and home economics teachers. After his death the Institute became a part of the State Normal School system;

today it is Stout State University, the only one of Wisconsin's State Universities to be named after a person. Stout's own investment in the Institute eventually reached a total of more than $600,000.

After his election to the Wisconsin Senate Stout came into contact with Hutchins, and almost immediately became caught up in the State's library movement. By 1895 he was a member of the Wisconsin Library Association. He guided the Free Library Commission bills through the Legislature, and he served as Chairman of the Commission, 1897-1905. At his own expense he inaugurated a traveling library system in Dunn County, which ultimately included more than two hundred traveling libraries. (They cost approximately one hundred dollars each.) He paid the operating expenses for the first two sessions of the Wisconsin Summer School of Library Science, the predecessor of the University of Wisconsin Library School, and more - - no one knows just how much more. Apparently, he had no ideas of his own about librarianship, but he was a generous accomplice to Hutchins and Stearns.[41]

Although the Association had found able, even gifted leaders in Hutchins and Stearns, neither leaders nor members had any clear idea of a direction in which to go at the close of the 1894 Conference. There does not appear to have been at that meeting any discussion of the Association's future; the "object" of the Association remained as it had been, to promote the library interests of the State, and no one seems to have suggested a program for that promotion, Hutchins and Stearns had an open-ended mandate.

Within a very short time after its reorganization the Association found that promoting the library interests of the State was a task well beyond its capacity. There was, the members believed, an universal sentiment for libraries in the State; almost every community had a record of attempts to found a library, and the State was "fairly strewn with wrecks of them." Still, of the two dozen or so public libraries in Wisconsin, "no more than eight or ten of these are wide awake and modern." Both of these conditions constituted serious sources of discouragement to library sentiment.[42] Association leaders consluded that without the aid of the State they were unable to overcome these handicaps. In the summer of 1894, however, no one in the Association appeared to have any firm ideas on the matter.

If there was indecision or irresolution on the subject of State aid it was Lutie Stearns who put an end to it. In the fall of 1894, on her way to the Lake Placid Conference of the American Library Association, she took a tour of the East, and visited some of the New England state library commissions. Further discussion with their members took place at Lake Placid. The reports of their work excited her, and she returned to Wisconsin convinced that it must have such an agency. Hutchins may not have shared her interest in the idea, but his talk to the Chicago Library Club indicated beyond doubt his conviction on the necessity of some form of State aid for public library development. And, Stearns' enthusiasm was close to irresistible. She described her desire for a State commission as an "unconcealed anxiety." At any rate, Hutchins is reported to have said, "Because Miss Stearns wants and believes in it, let us work for a library commission."[43]

The work for State aid for public libraries may have begun even before the 1894 meeting of the Wisconsin Library Association, with an attempt to enlist the aid of teachers. The March 1894 issue of the Wisconsin Journal of Education, which had not before expressed any interest in public libraries, carried an unsigned article, "Milwaukee Public Library and the Schools." It appears to have been written by Lutie Stearns, or, at least, based on information furnished by her. Several features of the Milwaukee program were stressed: its appeal to the individuality of the child, the provision of wholesome fiction, and the pre-eminence of inspirational literature in the materials provided. The main emphasis of the article, however, was on the formal educational values of the program and the lively interest on the part of the teachers. There was no direct appeal for teachers in other cities to support such programs in their communities, but it would have been difficult to avoid making the proper inferences.

After the 1894 American Library Association meeting

Hutchins and Stearns made a more direct appeal for Wisconsin teachers' support in the public library movement. Both were on the program for the 1894 annual meeting of the Wisconsin Teachers Association, held in Milwaukee right after Christmas. Hutchins urged an alliance between the public schools and the public libraries, for the greater benefit offered by joint effort in education. The report of his remarks gives to his appearance at the teachers' convention something of the character of a pep-talk. Miss Stearns' presentation was more formal, but still hortatory in nature. She emphasized how Wisconsin was lagging behind other states in public library development, and the essential unity between the school and the library. She also emphasized the common interest between librarian and teacher, and exalted both with an appeal to their consecrated sense of duty. She stressed the importance of cooperation among librarians and teachers in the development of moral values in children. She finished her presentation with an appeal for Teachers Association support in getting a library commission established.[44] Some time later she related that this program "excited an interest and enthusiasm whose effect has since been felt continuously and with increasing force." Perhaps, but at that convention the Wisconsin Teachers Association took no action on the matter; neither the Legislative nor the Resolutions Committee endorsed the library commission proposal, and the *Proceedings* of the convention reveal no floor discussion of it. In subsequent issues of the Wisconsin Journal of Education co-editor J.W. Stearns (no relation to Lutie) did publish a number of editorials which spoke general approval of the development of more and better public libraries in Wisconsin, but a State library commission was not mentioned.[45]

Meanwhile, Hutchins had drafted a bill creating a State Library Commission. (Stearns later said she helped write it). It was to consist of three ex officio members, the President of the University, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Corresponding Secretary (director) of the State Historical Society, and two members appointed by the Governor. It would elect its own chairman and secretary. The Commissioners were to receive no salary, and the Commission's expense budget was not to exceed five hundred dollars a year. Section Two required the Commission to "give advice and counsel to all free libraries in the state, and to all communities which may propose to establish them, as to the best means of establishing and administering such libraries, the selection of books, cataloguing and other details of library management." Further, the Commission was authorized to send its members out "to aid in organizing new libraries or in improving those already established."[46]

The bill attracted little attention in the State. Newspapers appear to have ignored it, and there is no indication that it became even a minor political issue. The

Wisconsin Library Association, at its annual meeting on 13 and 14 February 1895, gave the bill an enthusiastic endorsement, and appointed a five member committee to aid in securing its passage. There is room for substantial doubt about the effectiveness of the committee. Stearns has said that the bill received enthusiastic support from teachers, but there is no record of a Wisconsin Teachers Association action on it; she may have been referring to the fact that two members of the Wisconsin Library Association committee were school superintendents. There is a record of one bit of public support for the bill. In Mineral Point, in the southwestern corner of the State, Mrs. Annie M. Chase and fifty other women signed a petition for the bill, and sent it to their Senator, Mr. Spensley. He had the petition referred to the Committee on Education, and voted for the bill.[47]

The bill received fairly routine treatment from the Legislature. After recommendation for passage from the Senate Committee on Education it was referred to the Joint Committee on Claims, as were all bills which made appropriations. In this move Stearns saw sinister intentions, saying that the purpose of this referral was to kill the bill by committee inaction. It is true, many bills did languish in the Joint Committee on Claims, but many also did not, and her understanding of that committee's purpose appears to have been wide of the mark. She also said that without some strenuous politicking by Hutchins and Stout, the bill would have "been put to sleep, for two years, at least." It is difficult to give credence to her remarks. The bill passed the Senate 29 - 1 (out of 33 members), and the Assembly 72 - 0 (out of 100 members). Rather, it seems that most members of the Legislature saw in this bill an opportunity to appear progressive at very little cost to themselves or the taxpayers.[48]

The Governor signed the bill into law on 12 April 1895, just sixty days after its introduction into the Senate. However, he did not appoint the public members of the Commission until November, when he named Frank Hutchins and Lutie Stearns. On 3 December the Commission met in Mr. Thwaites' office at the Capitol, and organized itself. Hutchins was elected Chairman and Stearns, Secretary. The Commission had no staff, no office, and very nearly no funds, but the State was now engaged in promoting "the establishment and efficiency of free public libraries."[49]

It has been written that an important principle was established thereby. Perhaps, but there were serious deficiencies in the Act which created the Commission. First among them was its own composition, especially in view of its broadly stated mission. With the exception of Thwaites the _ex officio_ members had no special competency in library administration and management. Moreover, none of them had the time to spare for the Commission's intended operations, although Thwaites occasionally did go out and "aid in the establishment of a library."[50] Another potentially troublesome feature of the Commission's makeup was that it did not allow for the development of a political constituency. Each of the ex officio members represented an institution with its own constitutency, and to which he owed a primary allegiance. In the competition for State appropriations each was bound to put the Commission in second place behind his own institution. Ironically, it was Stearns' boast that this political neuterization of the Commission had been sought deliberately.[51] Finally, the Commission had no staff. There is some evidence that this deficiency was accepted in order to enhance the bill's chances for passage, but it also appears as though Hutchins believed that, at least for a while, the Commission could get by with using the clerical staff in the agencies of the ex officio members.

In their first meeting the members were more concerned with how the Commission would conduct its meetings than with the business it might have to conduct. Other than the election of officers almost the only business was the adoption of "Rules and Regulations of the Wisconsin Free Library Commission." If there was any discussion of the state of librarianship in Wisconsin neither Hutchins nor Stearns appears to have though it worthy of including in the Proceedings of the Commission. Almost as an afterthought, "The chairman and secretary were instructed to prepare a handbook, to contain aids and guides in the establishment and administration of libraries."[53]

As it was constituted at the end of 1895 the Commission had form, but very little substance. This was reflected even in its "Rules and Regulations," Article 1, Section 1 of which specified an annual meeting in June and other meetings as they were thought necessary. The members of the Commission may have felt some insignificance in it, for when the time came for its first annual meeting a quorum could not be obtained. Not even the Chairman was there, and it became the lot of Commissioner Thwaites to arrange for an adjourned meeting, which occurred on the next day, 10 June 1896. The Secretary's report for the six months after organization of the Commission required less than a page of the First Biennial Report, and most of that involved the acts of individuals and agencies other than the Commission.[54]

Fortunately events in other fields made it possible for the Commission to begin to assume some substance even before the abortive first annual meeting. In November 1895 Oliver Wells lost his bid for re-election as State Superintendent of Public Instruction. When the victor assumed office in January 1896 he brought in a new corps of assistants - - Wisconsin did not yet have a civil service - - and Frank Hutchins was out of a job. He soon began to give full time to the Commission's work, and on 1 April he began to draw a salary paid by Senator Stout.[55] At about the same time the Milwaukee Public Library began to allow Miss Stearns increasing amounts of time away from her job in order to work for the Commission. This appears to have been achieved on an informal basis; the reports of the Milwaukee Public Library make little direct reference to the matter.

One may assume that for Hutchins, Stearns and Stout one of the most important immediate objectives was to strengthen the Commission, and when the Legislature convened in January 1897 Stout was ready with "A bill to increase the efficiency of the State Free Library Commission and making an appropriation therefor." Its principal proposal was to permit the Commission to hire a Secretary who would not be a member of it, and also to hire clerical and expert assistance as the work of the Commission might require. Five thousand dollars was to be appropriated to the Commission.[56] The Bill was the first introduction of professionalization into the Commission; it would proceed rapidly in the next decade.

The Bill's passage through the Legislature was more or less of a routine matter. Senator Stout's Committee on Education gave it a quick recommendation, but the Joint Committee on Claims attempted to reduce the appropriation to four thousand dollars. Stout managed to have that amendment postposed indefinitely, and the Senate approved the measure on 7 April 1897. The Bill passed easily in the Assembly, 80 - 0, and the Act took effect on 24 April 1897.[57]

It is evident that in the Commission matters had been planned in advance, for it lost no time in reorganizing under the new law. At four p.m. on 24 April the three ex officio Commissioners met in Mr. Thwaites' office, along with Senator Stout. Hutchins' resignation from the Commission was announced, as was the appointment of Stout to replace Hutchins. Stout was elected Chairman, pro-tem, the roll was called, and he was elected Chairman. Hutchins was then appointed Secretary. Commissioner Thwaites than announced that Miss Stearns also had resigned from the Commission, and he moved her appointment as its Librarian. The motion carried; the meeting adjourned. At another meeting on 27 April the salaries of Hutchins and Stearns were set at $125 and $100 per month, respectively. At a later date the Governor brought the Commission to its full number by the appointment of Mrs. Charles Morris, of Berlin, Wisconsin. She was then President of the Wisconsin Federation of Women's Clubs.[58]

With the Commission now organized upon a more substantial base it became the center of the public library movement in the State, and the Wisconsin Library Association went into an eclipse which lasted more than a decade while the Commission dominated the scene. After their appointments to staff positions with the Commission Hutchins and Stearns declined re-election to office in the Association; whether this was owing to the pressure of their work or for reasons of principle cannot be said. They did not give up membership in the Association; indeed, they remained in powerful positions in it. It was under what Wilcox called "their tutelage" that the next several Presidents of the Association were chosen by the members. Although these were distinguished persons whose "names may have added luster to the Association . . . none were able or willing to do much more than bear the title." The Association itself remained a weak organization; during the remainder of the century its membership probably did not surpass fifty, and it took no official positions nor developed no programs concerned with the problems facing Wisconsin librarianship. It appears to have been unable to do more than conduct an annual meeting and "foster a fraternal spirit among librarians."[59]

Almost with the chronological end of the century the public library movement of nineteenth century Wisconsin had reached a climactic point in its development. That which came out of the movement, however, was not a system of library service. Rather, it was a system for the establishment of public library service in the State. Its development had occurred in a haphazard fashion, and it cannot be side with certainty that anyone involved with the system knew quite what to do with it. Hutchins certainly had strongly held if negative opinoins about the state of librarianship in Wisconsin.[60] Both he and Stearns knew keenly how weak Wisconsin's public libraries were; and Senator Stout stood with them in readiness to use his purse in support of any promising plan for overcoming the weakness. But on the threshold of the twentieth century their only sure knowledge was of the weakness.

Chapter 7

Public Library Politics in Wisconsin

The transformation of the public library movement involved politicization of it. By making public libraries a responsibility of local government the Public Library Act thrust it inevitably into local politics. The content of the Statute has been discussed, and only a few salient features of it are mentioned here. A principal point was that the Act permitted public library establishment, but did not require it. The library tax rate was to be established by municipal legislatures or by referendum; library quarters could be obtained only with permission of municipal legislatures. The directors (trustees) of the library were to be selected and appointed in a political porcess. Thus, the libraries specified in this Act were, as specified, autonomous; but their independence of action was circumscribed, and subjected to the local political controls inherent in American governmental systems.[1]

Full involvement of the public library movement in local politics was accomplished gradually. The 1872 Public Library Act allowed city councils and town and village boards to establish public libraries on their own authority. Hence it was necessary only for library promoters to persuade local legislatures to act. The persuasion of local authorities was a political activity particularly suited to the officers of library associations, given their status in many communities. The politics of influence prevailed with relative ease in Madison, Milwaukee and Eau Claire.

The Madison Institute contained a remarkable aggregation of political influence. The thirty-two persons who held Institute offices in the decade after the 1866 reorganization included one former Governor, five Mayors of Madison, five members of the Legislature, three judges and two district attorneys. Nearly all of the thirty-two held political office of one sort or another, and three of them also were newspaper editors or publishers. Their influence was used effectively in the establishment of the Madison Free Library when the Institute decided it could no longer carry the burden.

At the annual meeting in 1873 the Madison Institute resolved to turn its library over to the city if a public library were to be established. The resolution also authorized the Institute Executive Committee to effect the transfer at their discretion. Nothing was attempted immediately, but in the spring of 1874 Silas U. Pinney, a former President of the Institute, was elected Mayor. The Executive Committee than approached Pinney on the matter, and he took the initiative in presenting it to the City Council - - informally. An ordinance establishing the Free Library was passed on 21 November 1874, and the Institute Library was turned over to the Free Library in April 1875. There is no evidence that the people involved in these maneuvers attempted to keep them secret, but the Institute resolutions of 1873 were not published until 1875; and prior to the introduction and passage of the library ordinance by the City Council there was no discussion of the measure, nor the idea, in the local press.[2]

The establishment of the Milwaukee Public Library was an even more noteworthy demonstration of political influence by a library association. In the mid-summer of 1877 the officers of the Young Men's Association approached the Mayor with a proposal that the City take over the Association Library. In this case there is reason to believe the Association officers attempted to keep the matter secret, for the members of the Association were not informed of it until the story broke in the Milwaukee Daily News, some time after the Association's officers began negotiations with the Mayor. Mayor Butler took a different initiative than Mayor Pinney of Madison. After some negotiations with the Association officers he referred them and a perfected proposal to the City Council. The Council appointed a committee to continue negotiations with the Association, and it was the Council's action which caused the proposal to become public knowledge. After the Council committee and the Association officers completed their negotiations the members of the Association were permitted to vote on what must to them have seemed an accomplished fact. Subsequently, the Legislature and the City Council enacted the necessary statutes and ordinances, and the Y.M.A. Library became public property in the spring of 1878.[3]

In Eau Claire in 1875 different circumstances brought about a different sort of political maneuvering. Two library associations had come and gone between 1860 and 1873. In December 1874 a third was organized - - the Eau Claire Library Association. The organization meeting was held in the office of Mayor Porter. Eau Claire was divided into quarters by the main street and the Chippewa River, and the organizers of the Library Association were careful to apportion officers among residents of three of those quarters: the North, East and West Sides. (The South Side was a factory district.) Six months later the City Council established the Eau Claire City Library, and appointed a Board of Directors whose members included the officers of the Library Association, and who were elected to the same positions on the Library Board.[4]

The establishment of the Milwaukee Public Library was in some respects exceptional, because the City was excluded from the provisions of the Public Library Act, but in each of the preceding cases the process of library establishment moved at a deliberate pace, with little public discussion and no apparent opposition. In 1876, however, a change in the Public Library Act intensified the political involvement of the library movement.

On 3 February 1876 State Senator Flint introduced Bill number 121, S. to amend the Act in order to permit towns of one thousand populations to establish free libraries. The Bill achieved easy passage in the Senate, and was sent to the Assembly on 3 March. There it was referred to the Committee on Education, which reported it with an amendment which stated that a public library could not be established until approved by a referendum in the jurisdiction involved. There is no record of who introduced the amendment. It passed the Assembly; and the Senate, in Committee of the Whole, accepted the amendment without comment; and the Bill became Chapter 295, Laws of 1876.[5] Whatever the motives of the person who introduced the amendment, its effect was to introduce an element of delay and another opportunity for resistance into the process of public library establishment. Now it became necessary to persuade a city council or town or village board to authorize an election on the library question, and then to persuade the voters to accept the proposal.

The requirement had an uneven effect in the various municipalities of Wisconsin. In some the process of library establishment was accomplished with such ease that the referendum requirement appeared to be of no effect. One such city was Fond du Lac. The two library associations there, the Young Men's Association and the Neocosmian Society, underwent modest development in their decade of existence, and each amassed libraries of 1,200 to 1,500 volumes. By the beginning of 1876 both societies were in serious financial difficulty. The Association reading room and library had been closed since 1873, and the Association was all but defunct. In 1875 the Neocosmian was saved from bankruptcy by public subscription, but it was in a declining condition. In May 1876 the Association resolved to turn its property over to the city if a public library were to be organized, and the Neocosmian followed the Association lead. City officials appeared to be indifferent to these proposals, and nothing was done about them over the summer and into the fall of 1876. In the early fall a group of business men, described by the Fond du Lac Journal as, the "businessmen and taxpayers of the city," circulated a petition in support of the two associations' proposals. The petition was signed by sixty-two men, at least twelve of whom were Association members and two more were Neocosmians. The petition, which was presented to the City Council on about 10 October, requested an election on the public library question; the Council immediately and unanimously authorized one. These matters were reported in the Journal and the Commonwealth of 12 October, and each published one pro-library editorial, which may be summarized in their own phrases: "Nothing will be so creditable to our taste and

and intelligence, so beneficial to all our people, both young and old, as such a library;" and, "The benefits of a public library are too well known by all intelligent people to require any elaboration on our part."[6] On 7 November the voters of Fond du Lac confirmed the Commonwealth's judgment of them, 1,258 to 151. (In comparison, the total Fond du Lac vote for U.S. President in 1876 was 2,919.) On 4 December the City Council levied a one-third mill library tax, and appointed the Board of Directors, all nine of whom were members of the Young Men's Association (seven) or the Neocosmian Society.[7]

In Fond du Lac there had been little concern for a public library before the foundering of the two library associations. When the crisis came, and especially after the business leaders of the city took up the concern, the City Council and the voters obediently followed the lead of the public library promoters. In Janesville a different situation pertained. Interest in a public library began to develop about a decade before the crisis which was precipitated by the collapse of the Young Men's Association, but a disunited group of advocates were unable to mount an effective campaign until the Association became bankrupt.

When the Young Men's Association was in financial straits in 1871 its problems were minimized as the kind which could be resolved by better management by the right sorts of officers. A few months later Mayor Sutherland, on the occasion of his inauguration, advocated City provision of "suitable rooms and care" for the library, in addition to the liquor license funds to be appropriated to the Association; but this passing reference was quickly forgotten. Otherwise, library advocates were content to allow the Association to administer the public funds they were to receive. After the repeal of the Graham amendment to the Jamesville city charter there came the first public statement in support of a public library for Janesville. The Gazette publicized the recent establishment of the Rockford, Illinois, Public Library, and cited Wisconsin's year old Public Library Act as an unquestionably legal and acceptable method for doing the same thing in Janesville. The Gazette also made the first public admission that the Young Men's Association could no longer meet the library needs of Janesville.[8] The result was nil; no response was published. (A demand for municipal retrenchment was abroad in Janesville. In the name of economy the City Council refused to install street lights, and even debated the desirability of abolishing the City Marshall's Office.) The condition of the Young Men's Association continued to deteriorate, to the point where a special meeting was called to consider dissolution and public sale of the library. How the Association planned to avert this disaster was not reported, but it did manage to maintain a shaky existence.[9]

Interest in a free library remained relatively strong in Janesville, but its partisans continued to disperse their efforts toward its establishment. The Ladies Temperance Union began to work for a free library under its auspices. In a related move the Young Men's Association attempted to persuade the Young Men's Christian Association and the Sons of Temperance to agree to joint tenancy in the quarters rented by the Y.M.A., but this failed. The Ladies Temperance Union persisted in its efforts, and opened its free library in January 1875. Alone among the city's newspapers, the Gazette gave strong support to these efforts, and they attracted little support from the public at large.[10]

Part of the disunity among library advocates developed from their differing objectives for the library. The Young Men's Association was interested mainly in survival, and evidenced little concern for expanding the utility of its library. As for the Gazette, part of its support for a public library was based in a belief in the institution as a means to improve the "literary tastes" of readers, but a greater emphasis was placed on the social and recreational needs of young men in the city; and the Ladies Temperance Union was urged to make its reading room into a youth center by adding to it a billiard room and a lunch room. The L.T.U. was anti-saloon rather than pro-library, for prohibition rather than temperance, and presumed to see as much evil in billiards and bowling as in saloons. The Gazette proposals drew a sharp rebuke from the Union, and the matter was dropped. The Union Reading Room apparently did not long remain in operation, but its closing went unnoticed by the Janesville Press.[11]

The public library issue lay dormant until late January 1877, when the Gazette again took it up. It began with an editorial on the low estate of the Young Men's Association. Six weeks of silence ensued. Then, on 12 March the Gazette published a letter from "Taxpaying Citizen" who recited at some length the Public Library Act, and asked why the city could not have a high quality library, which would be a convenience to Janesville's best citizens, and "fraught with untold blessings to the poorer classes." He urged the Council to put the question to the people, suggesting that influential men in the city should make clear the Council's duty. The Gazette gave enthusiastic endorsement to the idea, and also requested the immediate adoption of some method of testing public response to the proposal. A few days later "Citizen" endorsed the suggestion. Nine days later the Gazette reported a petition to the Council for an election on the issue, as one which had "the approval of the prominent men of all parties and nationalities." In additional argument the Gazette cited the success of the public library movement under Illinois' public library statute, the library's status as "part of the most economical and effectual police system," and its potential for contributing to the better life in Janesville:[12]

> In dollars and cents it will pay in cultivating the productive energies of the people, in advancing good morals, and in adding to the attractions of the city as a residence for men of enterprise, of culture and of wealth.

The Gazette also solicited from the Librarian at Rockford a letter and reports on the public library there. Citing the materials he furnished the Gazette commended this information to the Common Council, and reminded the members of the rivalry between the two cities, asserting that a public library would improve Janesville's competitive position. Submitting to the pressure generated by these efforts, the City Council called a special meeting on the subject, for 28 March 1877. Opponents of the idea defeated the public library advocates by the simple strategy of not attending the meeting. There were enough of them to prevent a quorum, and the meeting did not occur. They received a sharp but futile scolding from the Gazette. All of this took place at the same time as the municipal election campaign. A new Mayor was elected, Pliny Norcross, a former President of the Young Men's Association, and he had the last word, for the time being, admitting that Janesville wanted many golden eggs such as libraries, parks and water systems, but that a proper concern for the goose required the city to be thrifty and, "above all, out of debt."[13]

Discussion of a public library subsided rapidly, and one was not seriously proposed for four more years. In 1881 the Gazette tentatively revived the issue, in an editorial prompted by the inability of the Young Men's Association to maintain its library, which was attributed to the loss of its most effective leaders. Citing the "leading members'" desire to have a public library to which the Association could donate its collection, the Gazette urged public discussion of the subject. Except for two plaintive suggestions that Janesville could profit by the example set in Madison in 1875, the proposal drew little attention.[14]

In July 1882 the imminent bankruptcy of the Young Men's Association prompted an immediate widening of interest in a public library. The plight of the Association first was announced by the Daily Recorder, along with a report that the members were divided about whether to sell the library or to turn it over to the city; the story concluded with the Recorder's first expression of support for a public library. There followed a hiatus which cannot be explained, but no Janesville newspaper gave space to the matter for another seven weeks. The silence ended with a Gazette report that the Association met on 20 August, and resolved to sell the library. The Gazette countered with a proposal that the city purchase the library. During the next ten days the press in Janesville was in the grip of something approaching frenzy, with the Gazette the most seriously affected. The 1 September issue commanded: "Agitate the free public library project." The 4 September issue called for a leader to take over - - any leader, and asked whether the ladies would remain uninvolved. In the same issue Mayor Thomas Croft was urged to summon the Common Council to buy the library. On 6 September the Gazette announced the library would be sold at auction on the ninth, but on the seventh the Council was reminded that Monday 11 September would not be too late for it to act. The issue of 7 September also carried a strong recommendation that the wealthy men of Jamesville should buy the library and present it to the city. By the eighth the Gazette was urging someone - - anyone - - to get up a petition asking the Common Council to buy the library; he or she would have no trouble gathering "several hundred" signers in three days, because no "sensible persons" would refuse to sign it.[15] It may be inferred from the Gazette's uncertainty about the sale of the library on 9 September that the Young Men's Association was delaying action in hopes someone would rescue the library, but there is no direct evidence to that effect. Janesville's third newspaper, the City Times, had not said much about the Association or a public library, but its silence was broken on 7 September, to advocate city purchase of the Association library and also that of a local book collector, Frank Whitaker: "Then we might say truthfully that we would have something to read." On 7 September also, the Daily Recorder asserted that every well-wisher of Janesville would approve the establishment of a public library, but it advocated another course of action: "Donations are now in order." However, the fear that nothing would be done was made most evident in its editorial, "Slaughter of Literature," in which it was argued that it would be shameful for the library to be dispersed, but if that must happen the citizens of Janesville were obliged to make sure the sale would be a success for the Association.[16] From all this frantic editorializing it may be understood that the people of Janesville, and especially the business community, were slow to respond to the crisis of the Young Men's Association, and that public officials were thus uncertain about what their reaction should be. Certainly there was not yet an organized expression of interest by representatives of either group. Resolution of the crisis fell by default to the unfranchised, but not powerless, women of the city.

In response to the Gazette's question whether the ladies would ignore the matter, "E Pluribus Unum" wrote that they would not. Doing as their unfranchised status necessitated, they were talking the matter over among themselves. Her letter emphasized the value of the library as a temperance program and she pledged a united response from Janesville's women. On the same day "Proxy's" letter was published in the Recorder. She expressed a similar concern for the public library as a temperance instrument, and asserted that the women of Janesville were unanimous in their determination that the library should be established, with the additional pledge that they would help raise the necessary money if the residents would "say the word."[17] Nothing more in this vein was published by the city press, but the Association postponed the sale of its library and then shelved that idea quietly. On 28 September the Gazette reported that the library was not to be sold, and that a women's organization would take control of it. By 3 November the women were organized as the Janesville Library Association. A few days later, as they were preparing to effect a canvass of the city for contributions to a library fund, Colonel Burr Robbins made his dramatic offer. The Young Men's Association library had been saved.[18]

The intervention by the women of Janesville, chiefly Mrs. Sarah Little, Mrs. S.C. Guernsey, Mrs. H.S. Hogoboom and Mrs. Hamilton Richardson, prevented the loss of the Association library, but the establishment of a public library remained an unresolved question. On that issue the city's political officials maintained an attitude which can be described only as enigmatic. Between July and December 1882 there was no public expression on the matter by any Janesville political figure. In fact, no city official had said anything on the subject since Mayor Norcross' 1877 plea for the goose which lays the golden eggs. The fact of such a prolonged silence says much about the shallowness of public library sentiment in Janesville. The ladies of the Janesville Library Association overcame this official apathy, also.

On 22 November 1882 the principal members of the Library Association held a private meeting which in some respects appears to have been a celebration of their success in preserving the Young Men's Association library. In retrospect, however, it was the key event in their campaign for a public library. Other than to celebrate their victory and to plan for the circus performance, those members of the Janesville Library Association also met for a "frank interchange of views" about what remained to be done for a public library. There was some discussion of methods for raising enough money to open the library, and operate it until the spring of 1833. The Gazette reported also the discussion of "many important and interesting questions" which would be aired thoroughly at the appropriate time. They never were. The most interesting information about the meeting was the list of non-members who were present also, including: Mayor Thomas Croft, future Mayor George Sutherland, former Mayor S.C. Cobb, and the wife of Mayor-to-be Hamilton Richardson. The elite of Janesville were at that meeting, and so far as it was in their power to do, they settled the matter of a public library for Janesville. Subsequent communications to Janesville newspapers reveal a confident attitude about the prospects for a public library, especially a report in the Janesville Gazette: "What men could not do, or would not do, they [the J.L.A.] have quietly done and have done it well."[19]

The public campaign for the library was somewhat anticlimactic. From mid-December 1882 until mid-February 1883 little was said on the subject. On 10 February the Jamesville Library Association announced that its library would open on 17 February, and invited all its friends to attend the opening. On 12 February the City Attorney addressed the City Council on behalf of the Library Association, in endorsement of its request for an election on the library question. The Council referred the request to the Judiciary Committee; on 17 February the Committee visited the Association Library, and announced its pleasure with what it saw. On 12 March the Committee reported to the Council a recommendation that the library election be held, and the Council voted unanimously for it. During the next three weeks all three newspapers published a number of letters and editorials urging a favorable vote for the library. on 3 April the Gazette reported "scarcely any opposition," and that same day the voters of Janesville registered an overwhelming decision in favor of a public library, 1,209 - 39.[20] In the face of such a mandate, opposition in the City Council collapsed, and the actual establishment of the Janesville Free Public Library became a somewhat routine city business.

In retrospect the public campaign for the Janesville Public Library appears to have been largely pro-forma. Both proponents and opponents of the project were discreet, almost to the point of secretiveness, the opposition especially so. The politics of public library establishment there were subdued, arcane, even. The Janesville experience cannot be fashioned into a model to apply against similar experiences in other cities, although evidence indicates that public library advocates in Fond du Lac, Kenosha, Neenah and several smaller cities followed parallel courses toward library establishment. The details of library development differed in accordance with local differences in the several cities, but in each the library advocates won their campaigns largely through their influence in groups which already controlled those cities.

In Oshkosh the establishment of the public library occurred in sharply contrasting conditions. There was not in Oshkosh a coherent New England elite in effective control of the city. Opposition to a library was determined, and some of it was public, and library advocates were forced into a public campaign that more nearly resembled a twentieth century political contest; finally, they won their campaign only through some legal and legislative maneuvering that verged on the sleight-of-hand.

The Oshkosh Library Association already has been described as an organization whose precarious survival for twenty-one years was owed largely to the will of its librarian, Mary Olcott. Its influence in the City government is best indicated by the fact that in 1884, when there was within the Association some discussion of attempting to induce the City Council to levy a library tax, the matter was not given serious public consideration.[21] For nearly six more years nothing was done about either a public library or improvement of the Library Association's condition.

Colonel Gabriel Bouck, a prominent Oshkosh Democrat, frequently held a sort of levee in his law office, attended by politicians, reporters, and just plain by-standers. Thus, on 6 December 1889:[22]

> Col Bouck was expatiating today upon various things of local interest, when he struck out upon the subject of a free public library. He is enthusiastically in favor of some movement in that direction.

The Colonel was a member of the Oshkosh Library Association, and the report of his remarks makes it clear that he was talking about revitalizing the Association. There was no immediate response to his remarks; indeed, for nearly two weeks there was no public statement about a library for Oshkosh. Subsequent developments made it apparent that the Colonel's words precipitated a split in the Association, and it was unable to unite behind one proposal.

The divisions in the Association did not become apparent until the week before Christmas 1889. At the City Council meeting on 17 December Alderman Heath spoke on the subject of a public library, saying that there were some unoccupied rooms in City Hall which could be used for a library, and if they were put to such use the city could expect liberal subscriptions for books. On his motion the Council passed a resolution instructing the Finance Committee to study the advisability of the proposal. The Daily Northwestern enlarged Heath's proposal, raising the questions of a city appropriation for a library, and of "consolidation" with the Library Association.[22]

At this point the divisions within the Association became public. Former President Hutchinson dismissed Colonel Bouck's remarks (which concluded with an argument for private improvement of the Association) as talk without foundation, because an adequate library could not be developed by private subscriptions. In support of his remarks he cited a number of the frustrations that had defeated several Library Association Presidents. (They all centered on the indifference of the members.) He then proposed the establishment of a public library supported by the revenue from a one mill tax. On the same day Association President Marshall Harris countered with his proposal that the City house and operate the library, but that the wealthy men of the city should provide the book funds. Still on the same day, Alderman Heath endorsed the Hutchinson proposal, saying that if the one mill question were put to the people, its opponents would be surprised by the result. No opponents were given specific mention.[23]

Despite the controversy with the Association, it was reported in the Daily Northwestern that in the city at large there was strong enthusiasm for a public library:[24]

> The public library must come . . . the idea has spread like wildfire. It is the project of the hour . . . the aldermen are with the people . . . . Give the people a chance to vote on it, and the thing is done.

That estimate of popular enthusiasm for a public library would not be borne out by events. It turned out that the most zealous advocates for a public library in Oshkosh were the managers of the Daily Northwestern. During 18 December 1889 - 29 March 1890 they published nineteen editorials on the subject.[25] Their arguments were built around four main points:

1. The low cost of the proposed library, ten cents of each one hundred dollars in taxes.
2. The library's value to the residents of Oshkosh.
3. Oshkosh could not, on the record, sustain a library by private subscription, but a public library would attract gifts from wealthy residents.
4. Establishment and operation of a public library is an appropriate use of public funds.

Unfortunately for the hopes expressed in the Northwestern few people in Oshkosh agreed with the arguments presented there. Neither of the other newspapers in the city (the Labor Advocate and the Times) supported the public library proposal (nor did they oppose it openly). Despite repeated assertions in the Northwestern about the general desire for a library, and its repeated plea for contributions on the subject, after the statements by Harris, Heath and Hutchinson in the 19 December issue, the press of

Oshkosh did not publish a line of citizen support for the library.[26]

It is apparent from the many Northwestern editorials on the subject that the editors were responding to privately expressed opinions in opposition to a public library, especially in its statements which argued that private support would be inadequate to the need, that the costs would be easily afforded by any taxpayer in the city, and that it was a proper use of public funds.[27]

There was some public opposition to the proposal for a public library. The most outspoken opponent was none other than Colonel Gabriel Bouck. On the morning before Christmas a Northwestern reporter asked the Colonel's opinion of the public library proposal, and received a stern and disconcerting reply:[28]

> I am decidedly opposed to levying a tax for a public library . . . a return in the direction of a parental system of government . . . . The words 'free library' as used thus are tempting, but delusive. . . . Fifteen hundred . . . or two thousand dollars would enlarge our library to meet our present wants. This should be donated by those of our citizens who are pecuniarily able to do so and generous . . . those who wish to take the books home and read should be willing to pay a small annual stipend . . . .

The Northwestern's lack of confidence in the City Council was not entirely warranted; it was maintaining at least a show of concern. Early in January 1890 the Council instructed the City Attorney to inform it about the "formalities" of library establishment, and to prepare the ordinances or resolutions necessary for authorizing an election on the library. On 25 January the Council adopted a resolution authorizing the library election at the same time as the spring general election. Only one member objected, and his objection was procedural rather than substantive: he argued that only taxpayers should be allowed to vote in the library election. (He was not identified in the report of Council Procedings.) The Council ignored his protests.[30]

The people of Oshkosh were not greatly interested in the matter. From Christmas 1889 until April 1890 the Oshkosh press published only three communications, by two persons, about a public library. All three were published in the Oshkosh Times, which announced no position on the library, and all three were in opposition to a tax supported public library. The Northwestern engaged both in an argument which subsided quickly. The three letters appeared in February; from then on the Northwestern had the field to itself, although subsequent editorials revealed a continuing uncertainty about the fate of the project.[31]

The uncertainty was justified. On 1 April the public library proposal was defeated by a margin of 650 votes. The Northwestern was stunned, and in a bitter editorial blamed Democratic opposition for the "outrage," charging Democrats with favoring "Free Whiskey, Free Ignorance, but No Free Library." The temper of the editors was no better the next day, and their gloom was deeper. Referring to some Oshkosh Library Associations members who were "just mad enough to favor shutting up the library altogether," the Northwestern asserted, "It would serve the people according to their recorded deserts [sic] to do so . . . ."[32]

The Association did not share the bitterness expressed in the Northwestern, but it floundered through a few days of attempting to determine a course of action, and discussed the advisability of another election attempt in the spring of 1891. Librarian Mary Olcott resolved the issue. She packed up the books, put them in storage against a happier occasion, and the Oshkosh Library Association was defunct.[33]

The charge that Democratic opposition was responsible for the library defeat cannot be sustained by the record. It is apparent that public disinterest was a more potent factor. Even so, the Library Association also was a principal contributor. Unable to agree among themselves on a course of action the members defaulted on the opportunity to provide leadership in the campaign; and the proposals and counterproposals emanating from their leaders must have served mainly to confuse an electorate who were indifferent to the issue.

In the winter of 1894/1895 the public library became a live issue again. Although there is some confusion in the available records this new attempt to establish a public library came from three principal sources: the working men of the city, the Superintendent of School, and a "library committee" of prominent residents. In January and February of 1895 the Workingmen's Club held a series of discussions on local problems. One of these was the lack of a public library, which the Club proposed should be remedied by establishment of a tax supported library. Reports of its discussion on the subject stimulated a new interest, and Mayor Kellogg appointed a committee to study the problem. R. H. Halsey, Superintendent of Schools, was a member of the committee, and he came to be regarded as the person who was at all times foremost in the effort to establish a library. In early March 1895 the library committee, which had no official standing in the city, appointed a subcommittee to petition the City Council for a library election. The subcommittee included Judge C.D.Cleveland, George S. Albee (President, Oshkosh State Normal School), Mrs. George A. Buckstaff (wife of the Assemblyman from Oshkosh), Superintendent Halsey, and Colonel John Hicks, a prominent attorney. At the same time the library committee expressed its belief that private subscriptions of three or four thousand dollars could be raised if the library were established.[34]

The Council was sympathetic, and passed unanimously a resolution ordering the library referendum. From this point the library committee was in general charge of the effort to establish a library. Opposition was scattered and unorganized. Nevertheless, remembering the defeat of 1890, and conscious that it was easy for voters to lose track of the library issue in the hugger-mugger of a political campaign, the committee embarked on an organized effort. As it saw the problem, voter apathy was the principal obstacle to success, and its main efforts were directed toward overcoming that apathy. Women were reminded of their responsibility to see that their husbands voted for the library. Students in the high schools were instructed in the advantages a public library would offer to them, and were encouraged to write letters to their fathers and older brothers, urging them to vote for the library. Also, a circular was prepared by Superintendent Halsey for inclosure with the student letters. (This tactic may not have worked as well as hoped, for just prior to the election the Superintendent began distribution of the letter to the parents of all children in the schools.) Ministers were asked to remind their congregations to vote for the library. Large posters about the library were hung in the polling places of the city. The most political measure, however, was a resolution adopted unanimously by the Mayor and Common Council of Oshkosh, "heartily" recommending to all voters in the city that they vote for the library, in the best interests of the city, and especially of its young people.[35]

It was believed in Oshkosh that the votes of working men defeated the library proposal of 1890, and among the library committee there was concern that labor opposition might again be a critical factor in the election. To the evident relief of library advocates, organized labor gave strong support to the project. The Labor Advocate published editorials emphasizing the "evident necessity" for a library. The Weekly Times (under the same management as the daily Times) with strong labor affinities, was at some pains to dispel what the editors regarded as a canard against labor; and the Trades Union Council not only endorsed the project, but urged Oshkosh labor "to use all honorable means within their power to further the founding of such an institution." In addition, the rank and file of organized labor were reported as much interested in the issue.[36]

The other important element in the campaign was the Oshkosh press. Perhaps the most important factor in press attitudes was the conversion of the Weekly Times to a pro-library position, which was important to a change of attitude by the labor - Democratic voters of the city. Also important was the different attitude of the Daily Northwestern, the spokesman for the Republicans and the business and industrial interests in Oshkosh. The Northwestern remained a vigorous supporter of the library, but the tone of its advocacy was greatly different from that of 1889/1890. Far less strident, far less argumentative, the Northwestern preached less at the people of Oshkosh, and reported more of their activities in behalf of the library. Even so, the paper still spoke keenly of the "odium and disgrace of no public library," and republished others' harsh comments about Oshkosh as "the Butt of Gibes and sneers." The Northwestern's principal themes, however, continued to be the low cost of a public library, and the city's desperate need for it. Additionally, it made the only attempt to inform the substantial German-American element in the city about the advantages a public library would offer for them. The paper also saluted Halsey's efforts, and the changed attitudes of Oshkosh labor.[37]

For the advocates of the public library election day was a cherished triumph. The library received 2,130 yes votes, against only five hundred nays. Only in one ward was there an adverse vote, and that only by a majority of six.[38]

Their triumph was brief. As soon as the vote was known someone pointed out that Section 931 required a majority by those who voted on the "city ticket," and the total vote for the Mayor was 5,715. In effect, it was stated, the library proposal had been defeated by 728 votes. In fact, the situation was even bleaker. Section 931 required a majority vote of all electors in the city, and there were about ten thousand.[39]

The news could not be accepted, at first. Some lawyers were reported searching diligently for "some decision that will construe the term electors as those voting on the proposition . . . ." Others referred vaguely to one or two uncited opinions which were favorable to their cause.

Someone suggested that the attorneys of the city convene to exchange opinions about whether the city had authority to go ahead and establish the library. Still others suggested that under their city charter Oshkosh already had authority to act. Yet another proposal was to call a special election, an idea dismissed on the ground that it would be impossible to get a majority of the electors to vote on the proposal. The Northwestern came to the gloomy conclusion: "It is a practical impossibility . . . . The law on the face of it is a virtual prohibition . . . instead of an enabling act."[40]

An attempt was made to have the City Council establish a public library under the authority presumed to exist in the city charter. On 4 April Alderman Kimball introduced to the Council a resolution for the establishment of a public library. The resolution was referred to the Finance Committee, which met subsequently with the members of the library committee to discuss the problems associated with the resolution. The result of the discussion was a decision that the City Council could not legally execute the resolution. On recommendation from the Finance Committee the Council voted indefinite postponement of the resolution.[41]

The library committee was ready with an alternate plan. The day after the election Superintendent Halsey began to propose a special election on the library question, to be held as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made. The idea was discounted at first, because it was assumed that a majority of electors could not be persuaded to vote in a special election, but Halsey was not to be put off. He was at the 8 April meeting between the Council Finance Committee and the library committee, and his plans for a special election were amplified there: Assemblyman George Buckstaff was to introduce to the Legislature a bill to repeal the "majority of electors" clause in Section 931, and to authorize establishment of a public library on a favorable vote by a majority of those voting on the question. The plan's attractions were apparent immediately, and the Superintendent quickly attracted support from the parties advocating the establishment of the public library. The Northwestern was guardedly hopeful. In the Weekly Times there had been an effort to blame the election defeat upon Republican partisanship, but even before the City Council acted upon the Kimball resolution, that paper had been converted to support the Halsey plan, saying that if matters were left to the Superintendent the city would soon have its library.[42]

Within two weeks the Legislature had enacted the Buckstaff bill. Halsey then elaborated his plan for a special election. As it was estimated that such an election normally would cost the city about five hundred dollars it was believed impracticable to ask the Council to authorize "so heavy an expense." Halsey offered a special election without cost to the city. Polling places would be provided rent free, public spirited citizens woudl volunteer their services as ballot clerks and inspectors of elections, and necessary printing expenses would be paid by public subscriptions.[43]

The library committee took on the task of implementing the plan. Members visited the regular election workers and the owners of the polling places to solicit their services. Other members solicited pledges to guarantee the expenses of the election, and a sub-committee was appointed to present to the Council the request for a special election. Judge Cleveland and Mayor Kellogg were the principal members of the sub-committee. By 30 April the committee reported "nearly all" of the election workers had volunteered their services, and that all but two polling place owners had agreed to rent free use of their places. One hundred and fifty persons had pledged sufficient money to guarantee costs. The committee desired the election to be held on 14 May, but it was announced that a long and complex agenda for the 25 April Council meeting made advisable postponement of the election request until a special meeting could be arranged by Mayor Kellog. On 17 May the Council met and passed unanimously a resolution setting the special election for 29 May.[44]

Now the library committee shifted their attention to the election itself. The main problem they foresaw was that of turning out a substantial vote. The residents of Oshkosh were reported as uninterested in the matter, and there were disturbing rumors of opposition among the factory workers in the city, especially in the plants of the Paine Lumber Company. However, no one seemed to know the grounds upon which the opposition was based. Perhpas the rumors were true; for this election the Trades Union Council did not endorse the library proposal, and the Labor Advocate published no favorable editorials. However, there was no overt opposition from labor. Nevertheless, the library committee and their supporters took several measures to counteract apathy and opposition. The Northwestern and the Weekly Times continued to advocate a favorable vote and a large turnout of voters. The leading industrialists in the city were asked to appeal to their employees to vote for the library, "it being the opinion of the committeemen that a word from them to the laborers would fall upon willing ears." The only overt opposition came from Colonel Bouck, who on 25 May pronounced the special election illegal; he was contradicted immediately by City Attorney Davidson and Judge Cleveland. That same day two thousand pro-library handbills were distributed in the city. On election day the high school students were given the day off, to visit stores and factories in attempts to persuade the voters to go to the polls and vote for the library.[45]

Only 2,437 voters went to the polls on 29 May, but the library was voted in, 1,557 to 880. As had been predicted, the opposition came primarily from the working class wards, the Sixth, Ninth and Thirteenth, which produced 493 nays.[46]

Despite the comfortable majority for the library Superintendent Halsey was somewhat dispirited by the small turnout, and some other members of the library committee appeared to believe that this less than commanding expression of public will might be interpreted in the City Council as ground upon which it could evade its responsibility. Such fears appeared to be inappropriate. A month later the Harris bequest for a public library was announced, and the Council subsequently established a public library as the first step toward qualification for the bequest.[47]

The full membership of the Oshkosh library committee never was made public, but the most prominent members, President Albee, Judge Cleveland, Superintendent Halsey and Mayor Kellogg, were members of the same group as the Oshkosh Library Association, the Young Men's Association of Jamesville or Milwaukee, and similar associations elsewhere in the State - - a New England, professional elite. As elsewhere, this elite had governed Oshkosh for a long generation, but in the waning years of the century their governance was under close challenge, perhaps more so in Oshkosh than elsewhere.[48]

Oshkosh was not the only city in which public library establishment was blocked by defeat in referenda. In Two Rivers in 1892 and Waukesha in 1894 the library proposals failed to gain even a majority vote. The Joseph Mann

Library Association opened its library and reading room on 23 December 1891. Use of these facilities was free to all residents of Two Rivers, but the Directors of the Association were convinced that such would not be the result of their efforts - - not soon, at least. Without waiting for authorization from the membership the Directors requested the City Council to appropriate two hundred and fifty dollars to the Mann Library. A select committee of the Council found it lacked authority to make the appropriation, whereupon the Council, on 7 March, voted to put the question on the ballot in the spring election of 1892. A few days later the Mann Library Association reported its financial condition: $49.26 on hand, and $233.91 in accounts payable. Other than the publication of this report and one editorial in the Manitowoc County Chronicle there was no campaign for a favorable vote. On election day the majority of the voters said no to the appropriation. (The exact vote was not reported.) No one protested the voters' action, except for a resigned editorial in the Chronicle: "Just why it was beaten we are unable to say. At any rate it will do no good to question any one's motives or criticize anyone's [sic] views . . . ."[49] There was no further public mention of the matter until 18 October 1892, when the City Council again put the question on the ballot for the November general election. Again there was no campaign for the library, but this time the voters approved, by a majority of 161 votes.

On 9 December the Council appropriated five hundred dollars to the Mann Library. It is obvious the matter was not a political issue in the ordinary meaning of the phrase.[50]

In Waukesha in 1894 there may have been the remnants of a library association, but there had been a number of efforts toward the establishment of some sort of library: and the lack of a public library nagged at the mind of H.M. Youmans, Editor and Publisher of the Waukesha Freeman: "Can anyone answer the question of why no public library is to be found in Waukesha?"[51] This passing query brought little response - - one anonymous letter in the Freeman, which Youmans interpreted as a public demand for a library, and he urged that one be established in the new building soon to be constructed for the Waukesha Y.M.C.A. The Y.M.C.A. did not respond to the suggestion, and the small interest stirred by Youmans might have subsided had not the women of the Beacon Lights Reading Club taken an interest in the subject. The members were among the most prominent women in Waukesha. They issued an invitation for a meeting about a public library, to be held on 16 April. The meeting was attended by "representative business and professional men," as well as by the leadership group of the Beacon Lights. The result was a somewhat vaguely expressed consensus for a public library, but it was a strong enough emphasis to persuade the Village Board to place the question on the ballot for the annual charter election to be held 1 May 1894.

Except for the advocacy in the press there is no record of any further effort to persuade the electorate, and the proposal failed, 521 to 561.[52]

Both Waukesha newspapers asserted that inadequate plans and public unfamiliarity with the project were primary factors in the adverse vote. They counseled patience and better preparation for a second attempt. There is ground for belief that disagreement in the press made a significant contribution to rejection of the library proposal. Both papers advocated establishment of the library, although the support offered by the Dispatch had a backhanded quality about it: "Waukesha don't want a two-by-four circulating library. Such an institution would be the laughing stock of the community;" and also a sneer at Youmans to the effect that whenever he did not have any better material for the Freeman he put in an argument for a public library.[53] The two papers differed in their choices for quarters for the proposed library, and those choices were related to another issue in the election: whether Waukesha government should be changed from that of a village to a city of the fourth class. The Freeman argued strongly for retention of the village form: "it will be much better for Waukesha to be a first class village, than a fourth class, stump-tailed city." The Dispatch urged Waukesha to vote for city government, and extended the argument to its support of the library, by stating that of course the new city would need a city hall, and that would be the logical place in which to locate the library. Although the voters did adopt city government in 1895, the establishment of a public library was delayed until after the turn of the century.[55]

A different course to public library establishment was followed in Beloit, where a library referendum was defeated under the majority of electors clause, but the library was established regardless. A Beloit Library Association was established in 1866, and survived ten years of a "living death;" and there was no city wide library organization at the beginning of the 1890's. In the winter of 1892/1893 the Monday Club, a women's club organized in 1892, began to advocate a public library. The Club also raised one hundred and twenty-five dollars for a library fund, and gathered a small collection of books. Its most important contribution, however, was to interest the Beloit Civic Club in the proposal. The Civic Club devoted its May 1893 meeting to the project. A number of speakers discussed the matter from various aspects, and the result of the meeting was a directive to the Civic Club Education and Recreation Committee to plan for presenting a library project to the City Council and the people of Beloit.[56]

The planning went slowly, but in September 1894 the Committee began to circulate a petition for a library referendum. Two hundred and forty-six persons signed it, and it was presented to the Council on 17 September. The Council handled the petition in established routine, and on 8 October ordered the referendum for the election on 6 November. The library proposal really did not become a political issue. Several residents wrote letters to the editor in support of the library, and there was no overt opposition, ahthough the Daily Free Press once reported a considerable disinterest. One writer observed that the recent closing of the Y.M.C.A. library made a public library imperative. Charles Bacon, Librarian of Beloit College, wrote a lengthy letter which was both an advocacy for the library and a brief instruction on public library costs and operations. On election day the voters approved the library, 1,182 to 387. (The total vote for Governor, in comparison, was 1,865.) On November the Free Press reported that the library proposal had been rejected, owing to the peculiarity of Section 931. Total voter registration in Beloit was 2,439; thus a favorable vote of 1,220 had been necessary. The Free Press was sanguine about the prospects: at the next submission a little effort would carry the proposal by a large majority.[57]

As events developed there was no need to re-submit the question to the voters. On 10 November City Attorney Todd assured the city that the tax levy for a library had indeed been authorized. Subsequently, the City Council Judiciary Committee considered the matter, and confirmed Mr. Todd's opinion. On 26 November 1894 the City Council levied a library tax of $1,113.03. Clearly, Section 931 was nullified, and rather casually, at that. Still, no objection was recorded, and the Council vote was unanimous. E.F. Hansen, the City Clerk, explained that as the Beloit taxpayer "is public spirited enough to want our citizens, Third Warders and all, to have good reading matter, he don't mind that little item."[58]

Beloit was one of the Yankee strongholds in Wisconsin, and the membership of the Beloit Library Association was even more so. Among its officers were to be found such names as Ayer, Dow, Dwight, Eaton, Emerson, Ingersoll, Parker, Strong and Taylor. In 1893 a number of these men were among the leaders of the Beloit Civic Club. Beloit College also was well represented in this group, including Professor J. J. Blaisdell, President Eaton, and Trustees Sereno Merrill and Anson Waterman. The Civic Club included the most influential people in Beloit, who were accustomed to having their way in municipal affairs, as illustrated by a brief controversy over the Mayor's appointments to the Library Board: A.F.Ayer, R.J.Burdge, J.B.Dow, George B. Ingersoll, C.D.Merrill, W.W. Sleeper, Erastus G.Smith, E.P.Salmon, and Oscar T. Thompson. One was from the first ward, five from the second, and three from the fourth. The City Council rejected the appointments on the grounds that the second and fourth wards were over-represented, as were Beloit College and the Congregational Church. Mayor Smith was "amused" by the rejection, but submitted a revised list. Merrill and Sleeper were replaced by L.H.Parker and Simon Smith. Parker was a New England Congregationalist from the second ward, and Simon Smith from the fourth ward. The second and fourth wards, Beloit College and the Congregational Church remained over-represented, but the Council acquiesced. Alderman Menzies (first ward) had led the Council in their rejection of the first list; his primary concern was for more representation from the first and third wards. On these grounds his colleagues supported him, but only to the extent of rejecting the first list of appointees. Alderman Menzies also advocated representation for the thousand or more Roman Catholics in Beloit. (The 1895 population of the city was 7,786.) On this issue his colleagues deserted him, and Mayor Smith rejected his appeal without comment. The Yankees who governed Beloit were very sure of their power.[59]

The Public Library Act of 1872 probably was intended as one which would sanction the establishment of a specific kind of public institution - - a permissive act, in other words. In effect, however, it changed an agency which was not of great interest in most communities into a local political issue. In its earliest form the Act made public library establishment a relatively easy matter, as the record in Eau Claire, Madison and Milwaukee indicates. In Madison and Milwaukee the leaders of library associations were able to use their considerable influence to persuade city councils to establish public libraries. In Eau Claire a similarly easy establishment was achieved by well placed people who had no library to offer the city, but who desired the same kind of institution. In each case a tax supported agency was insinuated into the local government with a minimum of political effort.

Senator Flint's amendment made a significant change in the situation. The requirement to persuade electorates to vote for a public library introduced a complicating element into the public library movement, but its effects were not immediately apparent to library promoters. There are indications that the promoters were not eager to put their case to the voters. In Fond du Lac, Janesville and Two Rivers the library association leadership made no real move for a public library until they became convinced the associations could no longer carry the burdens of operating libraries there; and in Janesville and Two Rivers the library promoters first sought alternative methods of public library establishment. There, once the library promoters opted for a public library the voters gave overwhelming assent to the choice, but it is apparent that the establishment of a public library was not an issue in the usual sense of the word. Opposition was minimal or non-existent by the time the question was put to the electorate.

In Oshkosh, Two Rivers and Waukesha there was sufficient opposition to defeat public library referenda, and even there the roots of it are not clear. What is most apparent from all three cases is that the opposition was more or less content to rely on the disinterest of most voters, and to keep overt opposition to a minimum.

Finally, what is most apparent is that making the public library a political matter did not vitiate the movement, but only complicated it.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

As the nineteenth century drew to a close Wisconsin witnessed the end of a phase in the public library movement. Sixty four years of development had resulted in the transformation of a localized phenomenon, the New England Social Library, into an institution with an organizational form determined by the State and promoted by a State agency. This new institution (for such it was, as a completed model did not come into existence in Wisconsin until the establishment of the Washburne Free Public Library in La Crosse in 1888) was an uncertain entity to the people who promoted it, and those who were to guide its subsequent development were uncertain of their purposes for it. The variety of factors which contributed to the establishment of the public library in Wisconsin were not the process of a coherent process of development, and there are no explicit records of the workings of many of those factors. Nevertheless, certain tentative statements can be made about them.

The basic concept of the public library came to Wisconsin with the New England migrants there. They thought of it simply as a community owned collection of books. However, by the time the Yankees arrived in Wisconsin social development in America already had compelled the beginning of a process of institutionalization of the social library into the more formal library association with statutory regulation of its form and activities. That process continued to intensify until the Legislature concluded it by authorizing municipal establishment of public libraries which were modelled directly after the library association. The Public Library Act of 1872 specified a library controlled by a board of nine members, a number identical to that of most library association boards of directors, who were to be selected by the elected representatives of any municipality which established a public library. As the elected directors of the library association represented the members, so were the appointed public library directors expected to represent the municipal electorate. To conduct the routine activities of the library the directors were authorized to hire "assistants," not librarians. Executive authority was invested with the directors, not the librarian. The concept of the professional librarian was not sufficiently developed to be formalized in nineteenth century Wisconsin legislation. The institution was still too strongly identified with the social library.

Even as the social library was transformed into a municipal institution it was becoming anachronisitc. For one thing, the directors of the library, social or public, were unprepared to cope with the tremendous increase in the numbers and kinds of books and other materials in the nineteenth century. The dimensions of this problem may be seen in contrasting the development of the State Historical Society Library and the Young Men's Association/Milwaukee Public Library. Founded in 1846 as a company of gentlemen-scholars, not too different from the group which organized the Young Men's Association, the Society achieved regular State support before the end of the 1850's, and by 1877 its library contained more than one hundred thousand volumes. Closely involved with the University of Wisconsin, the Society responded to and benefitted from the developing concepts of research and scholarship, and at the end of the century the Society library numbered more than two hundred thousand volumes. The directors, and, indeed, the librarians, of the Milwaukee Young Men's Association, founded in 1847, never contemplated such an increase in holdings, and their library attained only ten thousand volumes during 1847 - 1877. At the end of the century, when the population of Milwaukee was well past the quarter million mark, the Milwaukee Public Library still numbered only about 55,000 volumes. Another factor contributed even more fundamentally to the anachronistic character of the public library in Wisconsin. The social library in its New England origins was an integral part of the community in which it existed. The public library patterned after it was intended to be as much a part of the community in which it was established.

However, during the nineteenth century population increase and diversification in Wisconsin worked a marvelous change in the concept of community, and the words used to describe the municipalities of Wisconsin lost much of their original meaning. By 1895, for example, the "village" of Waukesha included over 7,000 people within its limits; in Milwaukee County the Town (i.e., township) of Wauwautosa numbered more than 12,000 people, more than many "cities" of Wisconsin. The City of Beloit had fewer than eight thousand people, the City of Janesville only a few hundred more than the Town of Wauwautosa. And town, village and city had differing forms of government.[1] Literally hundreds of Wisconsin's municipalities contained numerous communities which a nine member board of library directors could not represent in any real sense of the word.

The very concept of the public library as ordained by the Legislature was alien to many of those communities, especially those which were ethnically based. The German, Norwegian, Swiss, Italian, Polish and other immigrants to Wisconsin did not join the library associations of the New Englanders, nor, with very few exceptions, did they establish their own.[2] After public libraries were established organized immigrant groups insisted upon representation on the library boards of their municipalities, but, as in Beloit, they did not always get it. In many Wisconsin municipalities, even at the end of the century, the Yankee influence was still too strong to be overcome, and the public libraries of the State tended to continue as New England style, Yankee dominated institutions. There are also some indications that the immigrant groups in Wisconsin did not use the public libraries. For example, at the same time as he was assisting in the establishment of the Sheboygan Public Library Alderman Thomas Lynch was playing a leading role in the organization of the Marquette Library Association, to provide a library for Roman Catholics in the city.[3]

The Yankees and their kinsmen who led the public library movement in Wisconsin themselves underwent a change in attitude toward the public library. A social agency which at the time Wisconsin came into existence was still to some extent regarded as a device which people could use to originate knowledge was, during the century, transformed into a municipal institution intended by its promoters to assist in the indoctrination of the people in "American" values. The library promoters were disturbed about the course of development in American society, and they sought to use a variety of public institutions to halt or delay that development. At the same time they were of course caught up in and contributing to it; thus their statements on the uses and values of the public library reveal an increasing element of confusion.[4] Increasingly the Yankee was victimized by the triumph of his own industry, ingenuity and initiative; and as his dreams about a new Commonwealth faded hewas more and more tempted to the subversion of his own institutions in order to recapture the dreams. Jeremy Belknap saw the social library of New England as a means to the creation of new knowledge; the grandsons of his neighbors saw in its new incarnation a means to assist in the conservation of received wisdom.

An educational institution developed in the rural New England of the eighteenth century could not be maintained in the industrializing, urbanizing Wisconsin of the nineteenth, as, indeed, it did not long survive in nineteenth century New England. Perhaps, as Jesse Shera has said, as the social and economic conditions of the new States became more approximate to those of New England, the public library movement in those States underwent a course of development approximate to New England's. In Wisconsin the social and economic conditions were not approximate to those of New England for more than an instant; and although New England influence was at first dominant in the State and remained strong throughout the century, within the State there developed significant social and economic differences from New England: a different population base, a different industrial order, and different networks of communications between communities.[5] In the face of these differences public library development inevitably was to be different from that in New England, even though in its specific origins the public library of Wisconsin was a New England institution transplanted to the new State. The transplant, however, rapidly became an alien element in the society, and its development was arrested. Most of the library associations in Wisconsin barely survived their birth; those that did were sickly copies of the New England models.[6] Their membership tended to be drawn from a decreasing element of the population, and it was an element which increasingly had to share its prestige and status with newcomers who could not be attracted into the library associations.

There is an apparent contradiction in this view of the public library movement in Wisconsin, but it is one which derives from contradictory elements in the development of Wisconsin (and the United States as a whole) during the nineteenth century. The New England migrants who played such a fundamental role in the organization of many of the new States were strongly imbued with the forms and traditions of their pastoral democracy. Wherever they could in the new States, they transplanted those forms, and made a determined effort to maintain those traditions. The forms, supported by the structures of the States and the authority of law, withstood more durably the strains imposed by the industrialization and urbanization of America. The traditions were battered by the same trends and eroded by the passage of time. Almost from the time of arrival in their new homes the New Englanders began to feel the degrading of their traditions. To shore them up they sought to perfect institutions which, ironically, were appropriate only to the traditions themselves.[7]

The libraries themselves were minor collections, at best, and many of them actually were unsuited to the purposes their founders proposed for them. In them there were a variety of significant deficiencies, most of which stemmed from the inability of the associations to generate sufficient revenue to increase the collections systematically, or to house and maintain them adequately. Yet this decline in the associations occurred during a period when the numbers of books, periodicals and newspapers were increasing at a rate never before witnessed. At the same time the trends of industrialization, urbanization and occupational specialization were creating previously undreamt needs for library services to the multiplying communities of the cities, towns and villages of Wisconsin: and the increase of literacy there as elsewhere was a source of considerable pride in the society. Yet there is no record that these needs and opportunities were communicated to the library associations. Obviously, few in Wisconsin saw them as instruments appropriate to the condition of the State.

It is not a precise relation of the sequence of public library development in Wisconsin to say that the new public libraries at the end of the century were "successors" to the library associations. In too many communities the library associations simply ceased to be, and were succeeded by nothing. It is a more accurate description of developments to say that in some places association libraries were replaced by municipal institutions which closely resembled the association libraries, especially in those instances where there was a physical and legal transfer of property from the associations to the municipalities. The resemblance, however, was superficial, and more profound differences were present.

In the first place, a different group of people were involved in the new public libraries. The public library directors, being politically appointed, tended to come from different social groups than the library association directors.[8] More important, the shift to the public library resulted in the establishment of an increasing cadre of full time librarians who became increasingly conscious of their professionalism. As public librarianship in Wisconsin rapidly became a more large scale and complex activity the public librarians emerged from their status as "assistants" to the directors, and became the actual directors of the libraries.[9] What was nearly as important, they were organized into a new kind of library association - - a statewide professional organization with great potential for marshalling the library interests in Wisconsin. It was this development which constituted the most important element in the transformation of the public library movement in Wisconsin. Strongly conscious of a mission to establish public libraries throughout the State, the librarians in Wisconsin during the nineties also were alert to the ideas and the influence of their colleagues outside Wisconsin. In fact, their most significant achievement during the last decade of the century was their persuasion of the State Government to establish an agency for the promotion of public libraries.

The potential of the Free Library Commission did not begin to be realized during its first decade. Its principal leaders, Frank Hutchins and James Stout, still were strongly oriented toward the kind of librarianship represented in the earlier library associations, and they devoted a disproportionate part of their energies and resources to the establishment of traveling libraries in the rural communities of Wisconsin. The traveling library, a trunklike case of fifty or one hundred books which was circulated through the hamlets and towns of rural Wisconsin, was almost a miniature of the collections accumulated by most association libraries. It proved to be an instrument of marginal value in the new public library movement in the State, but that denouement was in the future. The most important work accomplished by Hutchins and Stout was the reorganization of the Commission, which was thus put on a stable base for the more effective promotion of public libraries.

In a strict sense the public library movement in Wisconsin did not come to a conclusion at the end of the nineteenth century; the first three decades of the twentieth were a period of almost unabated vigor in a movement which continued in the directions established in the last decade of the nineteenth. Indeed, as late as 1958 the Monona Village Library Association, with assistance from the Free Library Commission, was organized for exactly the same purpose as the Janesville Library Association in 1882: to establish and operate a free library in the belief that a demonstration of its feasibility would persuade the voters of Monona Village to authorize the establishment of a public library. In 1960 the Village electorate did just that.

A phrase from Churchill, although it was used in a radically different context, might well serve to sum up the public library movement in Wisconsin at the end of the nineteenth century: it was "the end of the beginning." What Frank Hutchins called the "wreckage" of the social library movement had been cleared away, and the leaders of the new movement stood at the threshold of the twentieth century, poised for the assumption of new responsibilities and the development of new institutions.

Notes and References

Chapter 1

1. Stewart H. Holbrook, Yankee Exodus (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), p. 128; Lois K. M. Rosenberry, The Expansion of New England (New York: Russell and Russell, 1962), pp. 26-47; Joseph Schafer, "Yankee and Teuton in Wisconsin," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 6: 386-402 June (1923).

2. For reactions to these developments, see: "The Locomotive's First Visit," Milwaukee Sentinel, 16 November 1871; "What a Man of Ninety-Four Has Seen," Milwaukee Sentinel, 5 April 1872; and the Ashland Press's somewhat bewildered response to the coming of the railroad, 7 August 1872.

3. For a recapitulation of the ways in which the industrial turmoil of the last three decades of the century affected one Wisconsin community see: Charles Glaab and Laurence Larsen, Factories in the Valley (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1968), pp. 233-43. After the Milwaukee riots of 1 - 6 May 1886 the trade Union movement was widely condemned in Wisconsin. See especially the Milwaukee Sentinel and the Evening Wisconsin for the period 30 April - 15 May 1886.

4. An account of industrial working conditions and their effects may be found in Glaab and Larsen, op. cit., pp. 231-33. The Whiting Mill disaster is reported in the Neenah Daily Times, 23 August 1888; the quotation is from the same paper, 12 August 1884.

5. "What the Young Man Said," Sheboygan County News, 26 June 1889; "Leisure Hours," Milwaukee Daily News, 7 March 1867.

6. Articles on this topic may be found in: "Sociality," Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 13 June 1853; "Public Libraries," Milwaukee Sentinel, 26 October 1871; "Y.M.A. Library," Milwaukee Daily News, 29 October 1871; "Free Library and Reading Room," Janesville Gazette, 8 January 1875; "Notes on a Timely Topic," Sheboygan County News, 3 June 1891; and J. T. Chynowyth, "What Should be Done for Our Boys?" Sheboygan County News, 13 December 1893. The above quotation is to the latter article. Similar discussions are to be found in: Janesville Gazette, 29 October 1864; the letter by "Zick'em," Milwaukee Daily News, 9 May 1869; Baraboo Wisconsin Prohibitionist, 16 June 1882; and Green Bay Gazette, 9 May 1888.

7. Robert C. Nesbit, *Wisconsin: a History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973). Ch. 22: "Politics and the Melting Pot."

8. William F. Whyte, "Bennett Law Campaign in Wisconsin," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 10: 363-90 (June 1927).

9. "Viola" was a Bostonian, to judge from his letters; the "American music" letter prompted a riposte from "Flauto," and the two engaged in an acerbic debate on the merits of American and German "culture" in the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 14 January, 26, 28 February, and 3, 4, and 28 March 1851. Simon Smith's editorial appeared in the *Tribune*, 24 January 1856. The remarks by the two Y.M.C.A. Presidents appeared in the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 6 May 1863 and 4 May 1868; Judge MacArthur's speech was published in the *Sentinel*, 26 September 1867. The *Sentinel's* complaints about the Library Board were in 25 January 1878, *et. seq*. The warning to the Two Rivers A. A. was in the *Chronicle* of 30 December 1890. The Sheboygan *Times'* complaint appeared on 6 March 1897. For a more general discussion of ethnic conflict in the life of one community see: Glaab and Larsen, *op. cit*., pp. 198-211.

10. *Tenth Annual Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction* (Madison, 1959) contains the text of the Act, Draper's lengthy discussion of it, and letters from several dozen distinguished men from whom Draper solicited endorsements of the Act. See also his "Circular Letter," 28 October 1858, in the Draper Papers, the State Historical Society, and the "Township Library System," *Wisconsin Journal of Education*, IV: 355-58 (May 1860).

11. "Constitution of the Milwaukee Lyceum," Milwaukee *Advertiser*, 19 January 1839; Manitowoc *Tribune*, 21 February 1856; Ashland *Press*, 16, 30 November, 7 December 1872.

12. Draper's report on the development of the Society's library is in its *Collections* (Vol. I, Madison, 1855); information about the career of Sidney Rood is in the Milwaukee Sentinel, 11 August 1874. The English Circulating Library advertisement first appeared in the *Sentinel*, 4 August 1851. The "cheap novels" advertisement was in the Manitowoc *Tribune*, 9 June 1858. For information about the availability of books on the Wisconsin frontier see: Hamlin Garland, *A Son of the Middle Border* (N. Y.: MacMillan, 1923), *passim*. An appeal for books for lumberjacks may be found in R. G. Thwaites, "Library of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin," *Library Journal*, 21: 125 (April 1896). For information about the Free Library Commission's concern for rural Wisconsin, see Frank A. Hutchins, "Travelling Libraries in Farming Communities," *ibid*., 171-73, and Lutie E. Stearns, "My Seventy-five Years, Part I: 1866 - 1914," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 42:282 - 87 (Summer 1959).

13. The judgment may seem uncharitable, but in the Wisconsin newspapers of the nineteenth century there is a great amount of material offering advice about reading. They offer ample support for the statement that confusion is a characterization of them. In many cases it is impossible to determine what points the writers were trying to make. For a selection of such materials, see: "Good Books," Watertown Democrat, 2 October 1856; "The Evenings," Waushara Argus, 15 December 1865; "Leisure Hours," Milwaukee Daily News, 7 March 1867; "Life and Books," Milwaukee Sentinel, 13 January 1872; "Inflammatory Literature," Janesville Gazette, 17 December 1879; "Unhealthy Literature," Janesville Daily Recorder, 22 February 1882; "Our Boys," Baraboo Wisconsin Prohibitionist, 16 June 1882; "Boys' Reading Room," Green Bay Gazette, 9 May 1888; "What Books to Read," Merrill Lincoln County Advocate, 10 May 1892; "Some Unhealthy Literature," Ashland Press, 6 May 1893; "The Baleful Influence of Romantic Fiction," Baraboo Evening News, 6 March 1895; "Summer Reading," New London Press, 1 August 1895; "How Some of the Boys . . . ." Sheboygan Times, 19 December 1896. The most remarkable feature of this literature is not the confusion exhibited, but the extent to which reading was compared to eating.

14. Constitution of the Female Moral Reform Society, Milwaukee Advitiser, 5 January 1839; "Infidelity," Watertown Democrat, 14 June 1855. The example of an evil book was Thomas Paine's Age of Reason.

15. "Good Books," Watertown Democrat, 2 October 1856; Manitowoc Tribune, 24 January 1856.

16. Janesville Gazette, 28 November 1863; Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 16 June 1866; Janesville Gazette, 8 January 1875, 19, 24 March 1877, 9 December 1882, 30 March 1883; Baraboo Evening News, 6 February 1895; Kenosha Evening News, 30 December 1895; Kenosha Telegraph-Courier, 2 January 1896.

17. There has been little study of these matters with respect to Wisconsin cities, but Glaab and Larsen, op. cit., have some value. Michael H. Frisch, "The Community Elite and the Emergence of Urban Politics: Springfield, Massachusetts, 1840 - 1880," offers useful insight, in: Nineteenth Century Cities, ed. by Stephan Thernstrom and Richard Sennett (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969), pp. 281, 287. For information about a Wisconsin business man's attitudes on local government, see the remarks of George Bowers, Vice President of the Fond du Lac Business Men's Ass'n (and a former Director of the Y.M.A. there) in the Milwaukee Sentinel, 12 January 1877, and the remarks by the Oshkosh Alderman who thought only taxpayers should be allowed to vote in a library referendum, Oshkosh Daily Northwestern, 27 January 1890. See also, "Old Merchant" on the business man as the "conservator" of public morals, Milwaukee Sentinel, 4 November 1853.

18. Watertown *Democrat*, 2 October 1856; Janesville *Gazette*, 5 December 1873; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 10 September 1877; Janesville *Gazette*, 25 April 1877; Green Bay *Gazette*, 18 April 1888; Lake Geneva *Herald*, 22 June 1895.

19. Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 1 June 1875; Janesville *Gazette*, 12 March 1877, and *Daily Recorder*, 17 March 1883; Beaver Dam *Argus*, 17 April 1890: Waukesha *Freeman*, 26 April 1894; Baraboo *Evening News*, 6 February 1895; Ashland *Press*, 30 July 1892.

20. Janesville *Gazette*, 24 March 1877; Waukesha *Freeman*, 29 March 1894; Lake Geneva *Herald*, 8 June 1894, 22 June 1895; Kenosha *Evening News*, 30 December 1895.

21. Watertown *Democrat*, 2 October 1856; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 23 August 1871 (H. H. West, Editor of the *Sentinel*, was an active member of the Y.M.A., to become its President in 1873); Baraboo *Republic*, 28 June 1882; Janesville *Daily Recorder*, 26 January 1880; Beaver Dam *Argus*, 10 April 1890.

22. Manitowoc *Tribune*, 24 January 1856; Janesville *Gazette*, 28 November 1863; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 26 October 1871; Robert Hill, "Shall the Institution be Sustained?" Milwaukee *Daily News*, 19 November 1871; Janesville *Gazette*, 9 December 1882; Ashland *Press*, 16 July 1887; Wisconsin Rapids *Wood County Reporter*, 15 August 1889; Beaver Dam *Argus*, 17 April 1890; Baraboo *Evening News*, 2 May 1895.

23. Baraboo *Republic*, 25 September 1895; Kenosha *Telegraph-Courier*, 31 October 1895; Baraboo *Evening News*, 14 March 1896; Kenosha *Telegraph-Courier*, 19 March 1896.

Chapter 2

1. New York. Legislature. 19th Session (1796), Ch. 43. See also: Jesse H. Shera, *Foundations of the public library* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), pp. 59-63, for discussion of these early statutes for library associations.

2. *U. S. Statutes at Large*, 24th Congress, 1st Session, 1836. Ch. 54.

3. *Acts Passed at the First and Second Session of the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Wisconsin.* (Burlington, W. T.: James Clark, Printer to the Legislative Assembly, 1838.) Appendix.

4. *Ibid*., pp. 267-68.

5. "District" is not defined in the Act.

6. *Laws of the Territory of Wisconsin, Passed at Madison, by the Legislative Assembly, at its Annual Session of 1839-40.* (Milwaukee: Harrison Reed, Printer, 1840) No. 47; Wisconsin Territory. Territorial Council. *Journal of the Council* (Madison: William W. Wyman, Printer, 1840), *passim*.

7. According to one authority, Mr. Robert Kaminsky, Deputy Law Librarian, Library of Congress (consultation, 5 December 1968), much of this sort of thing still goes on. The revisiors have their reasons for the changes, and legislatures tend to accept them without comment.

8. Louise Phelps Kellogg, "The Admission of Wisconsin to Statehood," *in* Milo M. Quaife, ed., *The Movement for Statehood, 1845-1846*. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1918), pp. 18-29; Frederic L. Paxson, "Wisconsin, a Constitution of Democracy," *in Ibid*., pp. 30-53; Kellogg, *op. cit*., p. 27.

9. Wisconsin. Constitution. Convention, 1846. Committee on Education, Schools and School Funds. *Report*, 25 November 1846. Ms. copy in the State Archives of Wisconsin, State Historical Society, Madison.

10. William F. Raney, Wisconsin: a Story of Progress. (N. Y. Prentice-Hall, 1940) p. 130.

11. *Journal of the Convention to Form a Constitution for the State of Wisconsin.* (Madison, W. T.: Beriah Brown, Printer, 1847) p. 400; The substance of the debate is in Milo M. Quaife, ed., *The Convention of 1846* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1919) pp. 568-75. Bevans' remarks are in 574-75.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 569-71.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 388, 399-400; also, Milo M. Quaife, ed., *The Struggle Over Ratification, 1846-1847.* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1920) pp. 19-97.

14. Paxson, *op. cit.*,; Ray A. Brown, "The Making of the Wisconsin Constitution," *Wisconsin Law Review*, 1948, pp. 648-69; Quaife, *The Struggle Over Ratification*, *passim*.

15. Letter in the *Independent American*, 11 December 1846. The letter contained a variety of objections to the Constitution. X was not further identified, but, from the context of the letter, clearly was a member of the Convention.

16. Milo M. Quaife, *The Attainment of Statehood*. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, c1928) pp. v-viii, 11.

17. Assembly Bill No. 87, 1872.

18. The record of proceedings on the Bill may be found in the *Journals* of the Assembly and Senate for 1872.

19. Chapter 80, *Laws of 1872*. Subsequently the Act became Sec. 931, *Revised Statutes of Wisconsin*.

20. Senate Bill No. 246, 1893, Sec. 1: Wisconsin. Senate. *Journal*, 1893. pp. 35, 603-04.

21. Both elections are discussed in Chapter 7, pp. 214-29, 231-33.

22. *Private and Local Laws of 1872*, Ch. 140. The provision was repealed by *Laws of 1873*, Ch. 37. Oddly, the Charter Amendment was the work of Assemblyman Graham, and he introduced it after his public library bill.

23. For a discussion of the gap between Wisconsin law and the realities of the social condition of the State, see Leon D. Epstein, *Politics in Wisconsin* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1958), pp. 30-31.

Chapter 3

1. Jeremy Belknap, The History of New Hampshire, (3 volumes, Boston: 1784-92) III: 328-29.

2. Jesse H. Shera, op. cit., pp. 30-40.

3. The biographical and genealogical sections of the histories of Wisconsin's counties are replete with tales of exactly this sort of movement.

4. Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America. (2 volumes, N. Y.: Colonial Press, 1900) I: 60.

5. Jeremy Belknap, op. cit.; Jesse H. Shera, op. cit., p. 57, 55.

6. Stewart H. Holbrook, Yankee Exodus, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968) p. 125. Unfortunately, Holbrook did not identify the source of this quotation, nor its date.

7. Milwaukee Daily News, 27 December 1871; Two Rivers, Manitowoc County Chronicle, 15 March 1892.

8. There are two principal sources for the names: the Session Laws of Wisconsin (under the conventional title, Private and Local Laws) in which the charters were published; and newspaper accounts of the organization of associations, or reports of their elections.

9. Annual Report of the Milwaukee Y.M.A., Milwaukee Sentinel, 8 May 1868.

10. One curious phenomenon was observed in research on this matter: in a high proportion of the biographies (almost 75 per cent) the religion of the officers was not mentioned, but that of their wives was. Therewere enough cases of difference between husband and wife that it became obvious that the wife's religion was not a reliable indicator of her husband's.

11. In none of what are still the major works in the history of public library development in this county does there seem to be much awareness of this pehnomenon. Gwladys Spencer came closest, perhaps, in her chapter, "100 Library Leaders." (The Chicago Public Library, Background and Origins. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942.) Sidney Ditzion's Arsenals of a Democratic Culture. (Chicago:

American Library Association, 1947) demonstrates little awareness of the matter; and Jesse Shera (op. cit., p. 244) came close to a denial that political power of the sort demonstrated here existed in the public library movement of mid-nineteenth century New England. Of course one must allow that the Wisconsin library associations may have been unique in this respect, but the matter seems to demand further study in Wisconsin and other States.

12. A complete list of library associations, their parent organizations (if any), and citations to their chapters are in Appendix I.

13. Cf. Haynes McMullen, "The founding of social and public libraries in Ohio, Indiana and Illinois through 1850." University of Illinois Library School Occasional Papers, No. 51, March 1958, pp. 8-9.

14. Also, neither Brandon nor Viroqua is listed in the 1870 and 1880 Census.

15. See, respectively, the Janesville Gazette for 1882, the Beaver Dam Argus for 1884, the Oshkosh Daily Northwestern for 1890, and the Baraboo Republic for 1895.

16. Dale Anderson, A Century of Banking in Wisconsin, 1854-1954. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1955)

17. Jesse H. Shera, op. cit., p. 76.

18. Maryland. General Assembly, 1842. An Act to Incorporate the Mercantile Library Association of the City of Baltimore.

19. Cf. David T. Bazelon, The Paper Economy. (N. Y., 1965) pp. 186-90.

20. Janesville Daily Recorder, 15 August 1882; Janesville Gazette, 13 February 1883.

21. Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 1 May 1875.

22. In fact, the Constitution of Wisconsin did not provide for the city as a form of government. Article IV, Section 23 stated: "The Legislature shall establish but one system of town and county government, which shall be as nearly uniform as practicable;" Article XI, Section 3 dealt with cities, but only to limit severely their powers of government.

23. Ashland Press, 3 August, 28 September, 16, 30 November, December 1872; Ashland Library Association, Minute Book Postscript, 16 April 1908.

24. Marinette Eagle, 8 April, 16 December 1876, 28 July 1877, 23 March, 27 July 1878.

25. History of Dodge County (Chicago, 1880), p. 511; Homer B. Hubbell, Dodge County Wisconsin Past and Present (Chicago: S. J. Clark Co., 1913) I: 335.

26. "First Libraries in the City of Oshkosh," Oshkosh Daily Northwestern, 1 September 1900.

27. Milwaukee Sentinel, 2 May 1866. 3 May 1871; Milwaukee Daily News, 27 December 1871.

28. The History of Waukesha County, Wisconsin (Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1880). pp. 707-08.

29. In addition to the heavy industry which developed in Kenosha, Racine and Milwaukee, the paper industry which developed along the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers, the woodworking and other light manufacturing centers scattered through the State, the State's agriculture was industrialized. This development, little understood by city people, is related in Eric E. Lampard, The Rise of the Dairy Industry in Wisconsin (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966). The dairy cow - - the very symbol of bucolic simplicity - - became the focu of an increasingly sophiscated economic organization, the main elements of which were completed by the end of the nineteenth century.

30. Ashland Press, 20 July 1872.

31. Milwaukee Sentinel, 13 December 1847.

32. Milwaukee Daily News, 5 February 1852; Milwaukee Sentinel, 18 March 1853; Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 6 May 1854; Watertown Democrat, 20 November 1856.

33. 11 December 1861.

34. Fond du Lac Weekly Commonwealth, 4 January 1865; Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 13 April, 18 June 1866; Janesville Gazette, 19 December 1971.

35. Manitowoc Tribune, 27 December 1856; Waushara Argus 27 May 1868.

36. Baraboo Republic, 1 February 1882; Wisconsin Prohibitionist and Baraboo Weekly Bulletin, 30 June 1882; Baraboo Sauk County Democrat, 17 June 1882.

37. Beaver Dam Argus, 4 11 September 1884; Beaver Dam Dodge County Citizen, 21, 28 August, 4, 11 September 1884; Sparta Herald, 27 November 1861; Menomonie Dunn County News, 18 December 1874; Two Rivers Manitowoc County Chronicle, 21 October 1890.

38. LaCrosse Democrat, 26 April 1853; Lilly M. E. Borreson, "LaCrosse Young Men's Library Association and other Antecedents of the LaCrosse Public Library." LaCrosse County Historical Society, Sketches, Series 2 (1937), pp. 37-50, p. 37.

39. Superior Evening Telegram. Undated clipping in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

40. There is considerable evidence to this point in Bayrd Still, Milwaukee; the History of a City (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1948), esp. Ch. 8, and in Charles H. Glaab and Laurence H. Larsen, op. cit., esp. ch. 3. It is unfortunate that in neither work is the matter given direct consideration.

41. Michael Frisch, op. cit.

42. Milwaukee Sentinel, 16 November 1871, 16 February 1872.

43. Baraboo Republic, 22 November 1882.

44. Janesville Gazette, 4, 13 November 1882, 22 February 1883.

45. Two Rivers Manitowoc County Chronicle, 27 January, 3 March 1891. One thousand dollars was given by Mrs. Joseph Mann.

46. Carl Bode, The American Lyceum (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968) pp. 249-51, 174-75. Bode applied the name lyceum to the library associations of Janesville, Milwaukee, Sheboygan and several other cities, although none called itself that.

47. Lilly M. E. Borreson, op. cit., p. 40; History of LaCrosse County, 1880, p. 660.

48. Sheboygan Falls Sheboygan County News, 1 December 1886; Sheboygan Herald, 16 January, 13 November 1880; Sheboygan Times, 16 November 1880, 13 November 1881.

49. Fort Atkinson Jefferson County Union, 22 March, 11 April 1890, 30 January 1891, 11 March, 13 May 1892, 28 April 1893; Beaver Dam Argus, 30 July 1885; Two Rivers Manitowoc County Chronicle, 17, 23, 30 December 1890.

50. By 1895 there were twenty-eight tax-supported public libraries in the State, and in another decade their number would increase four-fold.

51. Harry Ellsworth Cole, *A Standard History of Sauk County, Wisconsin* . . . . (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1918) p. 473.

52. Mary D. Bradford, "Memoirs . . . ." *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 14: 37172 (June 1931); Carrie Cropley, *Kenosha* (Kenosha, 1954) pp. 40-41; G. W. Johnston, "A Library History." Kenosha Telegraph-Courier, 19 March 1896; Kenosha *Evening News*, *Telegraph-Courier* and *Union*, 1 November 1895-10 January 1896.

53. G. W. Johnston, *op. cit.*

Chapter 4

1. Article 3, Constitution of the Milwaukee Lyceum, Milwaukee *Advertiser*, 19 January 1839; Milwaukee Lyceum Act of Incorporation, Act. No. 25, *Local Acts of the Legislature of Wisconsin, Passed at Madison, During the Sessions of 1838 & 9.* (Milwaukee: Printed by Daniel H. Richards, 1839)

2. Charter of the Young Men's Association of the City of Milwaukee, Ch. 97, *Acts and Resolves Passed by the Legislature of Wisconsin in the Year Eighteen Hundred and Fifty* . . . . . (Madison, 1852)

3. LaCrosse *Democrat*, 6 December 1853.

4. "Bayfield Library Celebrates 25th Anniversary," *Wisconsin Library Bulletin*, 25: 386-88 (December 1929), p. 286.

5. Milwaukee *Daily News*, 20 November 1867.

6. Prosper Cravath and Spencer S. Steele, *Early Annals of Whitewater, 1837-1867* (Whitewater: Whitewater Federation of Women's Clubs, 1906). p. 136.

7. W. P. Bartlett, in a letter in the Watertown *Democrat*, 18 December 1856; Green Bay *State Gazette*, 7 December 1867; W. W. Bates, in a letter in the Manitowoc *Tribune*, 27 December 1855. See also: "Viola" in the Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 26 February 1851; U. T., in the Milwaukee *Daily Journal*, 5 February 1852. The quotation is from the Reverend E. Tasker, in the LaCrosse *Democrat*, 27 December 1853.

8. Milwaukee *Daily Journal*, 5, 9 February 1852.

9. Janesville *Gazette*, 26 October 1870, 2 December 1874, 13 January 1875, 9 December 1878.

10. Milwaukee *Daily News*, 3 March 1868; Janesville *Gazette*, 9 December 1874.

11. LaCrosse *Democrat*, 6, 27 December 1853.

12. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 10 March 1851; LaCrosse *Democrat*, 27 December 1853; Manitowoc *Tribune*, 27 December 1856.

13. Carl Bode *op. cit.*, pp. 164-75, gives a good account of the increasing popularity of Eastern lecturers during this period.

14. Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 13 September 1853.

15. 12 October 1853.

16. Watertown *Chronicle*, 2 August 1854; Watertown *Democrat*. 20 November, 25 December 1856; Waupun *Times*, 1 December 1858.

17. 15 October 1862; 14 November 1866; 5 December 1872, 11 November 1873, 9 December 1874.

18. Milwaukee *Daily Wisconsin*, 12 October 1853.

19. Milwaukee Sentinel and *Gazette*, 1 November 1850.

20. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 18 March 1853; Milwaukee *Daily Journal*, 5 February 1852.

21. Watertown *Democrat*, 20 November 1856.

22. 6 May 1854; 11 December 1861; Sparta *Herald*, 27 November 1861; Fond du Lac *Commonwealth*, 4 January 1865.

23. *Wisconsin State Journal*, 13 April, 18 June 1866; 19 December 1871.

24. Milwaukee *Daily News*, 1 March 1855; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 13 December 1861, 18, 19 March 1862, 18, 22 December 1865.

25. Young Men's Association of the City of Milwaukee, *Catalogue of the Library of the . . . Association*, *1861*. p. 8.

26. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 6 May 1863, 3 May 1865, 2 May 1866, 5 May 1869, 4 May 1870, 6 May 1874, 2 May 1877; Milwaukee *Daily News*, 8 May 1867, 3 May 1871, 5 May 1875, 3 May 1876.

27. Fond du Lac *Daily Commonwealth*, 14 March 1866; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 2 April 1867; Eau Claire *Free Press*, 8 February 1872; Janesville *Gazette*, 26 September, 5 October, 1882; Kenosha *Evening News*, 7 November 1895.

28. Richard C. Wade, *The Urban Frontier* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959) offers some useful insights in these matters, especially in Chapters 5 and 8.

29. Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 20 April 16, 18-20 June 1866, 13 April 1867.

30. The list of churches is in itself quite instructive about the nature of the Association. They were: First Presbyterian, North Presbyterian, Hanover Street Congregational, Plymouth Congregational, Spring Street Congregational, Spring Street Congregational, Asbury Methodist, Summerfield

Methodist, Spring Street Methodist, and Union Baptist. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 7 June 1867. No report on the event was published.

31. Menomonie *Dunn County News*, 10, 17 July 1876; Tomah *Journal*, 31 December 1881, 14 January, 4 March, 20 May 1882; Eau Claire *Free Press*, 13 January 1870.

32. The nature and content of these programs are reported adequately in Carl Bode, *op. cit*.

33. Neenah *Daily Gazette*, 19 March 1881; Neenah *Daily Times*, 18 September 1883; *Daily Gazette*, 5 November 1881.

34. Neenah *Daily Gazette*, 22 October 1881, 18 March, 8 April 1881; Neenah *Island City Times*, 20 May 1882.

35. Neenah *Daily Times*, 6 December 1882, 11 January, 4 April, 30 May 1883.

36. *Ibid*., 30 May, 2 August, 29 October 1883.

37. *Ibid*., 29 October 1883; letter from J. E. C., Neenah *Gazette*, 8 April 1882.

38. Neenah *Daily Times*, 16 May, 2 August 1883.

39. Janesville *Gazette*, 13, 19 December 1871.

40. *Ibid*., 21 December 1871, 27 February, 19 March 1872. (The profits from the first concert were not reported until the latter date.)

41. Chapter 137, *Laws of Wisconsin, 1872*.

42. Janesville *Gazette*, 28 November 1882.

43. *Ibid*., 1, 14, 15, 28 September, 3, 13 December 1882; Janesville *Daily Recorder*, 15 September, 8, 10 December 1882, 27 March 1883.

44. Sheboygan *Herald*, 18 February 1881.

45. Sheboygan *Herald*, 6 May 1881; Sheboygan *Times*, 26 March, 9 April, 14 May, 4 June 1881. The Association's Library Hall could seat 250 persons.

46. *Ibid*., 13, 14 May, 4, 11 June 1881.

47. Ibid., 27 August, 17 September 1881.

48. *Ibid*., 3 December 1881, 28 January 4, 4 February 1882.

49. Ibid., 4, 11 February, 18 March, 1, 29 April 1882; Sheboygan Herald, 9 June 1882; Sheboygan Times, 1 July 1882.

50. Sheboygan Herald, 20 October 1882; Sheboygan Times, 21 October 1882.

51. Sheboygan Times, 14 October 1882, 3 February 1883; Sheboygan Herald, 20 October 1882.

52. Sheboygan Times, 4, 25 November 1882, 3, 24 February 1883.

53. Ibid., 13 October, 1 December 1883, 26 January, 2 February 1884. The 23 January meeting, cancelled owing to cold weather, would have been held on a day when the Times reported a temperature range of 0 to 8 above, Fahrenheit. During the winter of 1882/83 some programs were held on subzero nights, as on 31 January 1883, when a temperature of minus 20 was reported.

54. Ibid., 5 April 1884; Sheboygan County News, 4 March, 29 July 1885; Sheboygan Times, 30 May, 13, 20, 27 June, 11, 25 July 1885.

55. Wisconsin. Free Library Commission, Fourth Biennial Report, 1903-1904, pp. 72-74.

56. O. J. Shuster, Secretary, Oconomowoc Library Association, in Waukesha Freeman, 12 April 1894.

57. Superior Evening Telegram, op. cit.

58. Watertown Chronicle, 2 August 1854; "Circular Letter," 28 October 1858; Sparta Herald, 18 December 1861; Eau Claire Free Press, 7 May1874; Baraboo Republic, 9 November 1881; Fort Atkinson Jefferson County Union, 16 January 1891; Two Rivers Manitowoc County Chronicle, 29 March 1892; Waukesha Freeman, 29 March 1894; Baraboo Evening News, 21 September 1895.

59. Waupun Times, 23 February 1858; Sparta Herald, 25 December 1861; Beaver Dam Dodge County Citizen, 11 September 1884.

60. Beaver Dam Argus, 30 October 1884; Baraboo Evening News, 7 February 1896; Brandon Times, 29 February, 21 November 1868; Columbus Democrat, 3 February, 17 March 1877; Fond du Lac Weekly Commonwealth, 23 November 1864; Janesville Gazette, 7 December 1873, 7 January 1878, 7 September 1882; Lilly M. E. Borreson, op. cit., pp. 44-46 ("Books" is in quotes in this source); Menomonie Dunn County News, 13 February 1875; John M. Ware, ed., A Standard History of Waupaca County (2

vols., Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1917) I: 287; O. J. Shuster, *op. cit.*, Sheboygan *Herald*, 3 December 1880, 30 September 18-82; Sheboygan Falls *Sheboygan County News*, 1 December 1886; Two Rivers *Manitowoc County Chronicle*, 4 April 1893; Waupun *Times*, 23 February 1858; *History of Dodge County, Wisconsin*, p. 511.

61. Columbus *Democrat*, 17 March 1877; Fond du Lac *Weekly Commonwealth*, 23 November 1864; Beaver Dam *Argus*, 30 October 1884.

62. Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 5 December 1866; Sparta *Monroe County Democrat*, 15 June 1863.

63. Menomonie *Dunn County News*, 24 March 1877; Janesville *Gazette*, 3, 15 January 1873 (the lists were of 15 and 17 titles, respectively), 28 February 1877, 7 January 1878; Ripon *Commonwealth*, 17 February 1893.

64. Sparta *Herald*, 18 December 1861; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 13 May, 3 October 1867; Lilly M. E. Borreson, *op. cit.*, p. 42; "Circular" by Thomas Bardon, in Superior *Evening Telegram*, *op. cit.*, Neenah *Daily Times* 6 December 1883; Fort Atkinson *Jefferson County Union*, 27 May 1892.

65. The material from which the composite sentence was constructed may be found in the Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 13 May 1867; Sparta *Herald*, 18 December 1861; Neenah *Daily Times*, 28 November 1883.

66. Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 3 October 1867; Janesville *Gazette*, 30 March 1883; Beaver Dam *Argus*, 30 October 1884.

67. O. J. Shuster, *op. cit.*

68. Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 5 December 1866; Neenah *Daily Times*, 28 November 1883; Ripon *Commonwealth*, 17 February 1893; *Standard History of Waupaca County*, p. 286; Janesville *Gazette*, 15 November 1877.

69. Fort Atkinson *Jefferson County Union*, 28 March 1890.

70. For the LaCrosse Y.M.L.A. in 1872 and 1877: Lilly M. E. Borreson, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-45; the New London Library Association in 1895: John M. Ware, *op. cit.*, I: 287; the Joseph Mann Library in 1893: Two Rivers *Manitowoc County Chronicle*, 4 April 1893; Beaver Dam Library Association in 1884: Beaver Dam *Argus*, 18 December 1884.

71. Waupun *Times*, 23 February 1858; Eau Claire *Free Press*, 19 January 1860; Sparta *Monroe County Eagle*, 15 June 1863;

Memoirs of Vernon County, p. 185; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 13 April 1867; Superior *Evening Telegram*, *op. cit.*; *Memoirs of Vernon County*, pp. 185-86; Ripon *Commonwealth*, 17 February 1893.

72. Fond du Lac *Weekly Commonwealth*, 7 January 1857; William F. Brown, ed., *Rock County, Wisconsin* (Chicago: C. F. Cooper & Co., 1908) p. 587; Fond du Lac *Weekly Commonwealth*, 23 November 1864; Waushara *Argus*, 1 December 1865; *Brandon Times*, 19 December 1868; Sheboygan *Herald*, 3 December 1880; Beaver Dam *Argus*, 20 November 1884.

73. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 6 May 1863; Fond du Lac *Weekly Commonwealth*, 23 November 1864; Beaver Dam *Argus*, 4 September 1884; Fort Atkinson *Jefferson County Union*, 13 May 1892.

74. *Memoirs of Vernon County*, pp. 185-86; Sparta *Monroe County Eagle*, 15 June 1863; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 7 February 1874.

75. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 1 September 1900. The occasion for this dreary tale was the dedication of the Oshkosh Public Library in its new building.

76. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 6 May 1863; *Ibid.*, 8 May 1867; Milwaukee *Daily News*, 8 May 1867; *Ibid.*, 26 December 1871, 13 February 1872.

77. Ralph G. Plumb, *A History of Manitowoc County* (Manitowoc, 1904) pp. 252-54.

78. Louis Falge, ed., *History of Manitowoc County, Wisconsin*. (Chicago: Goodspeed Historical Association, 1917) I: 366-67; Sheboygan Falls *Sheboygan County News*, 2 December 1891.

79. Two Rivers *Manitowoc County Chronicle*, 14, 28 October 1890, 9 June 1891.

80. Lilly M. E. Borreson, *op. cit.*, p. 40; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 20 April 1866; Two Rivers *Manitowoc County Chronicle*, 15 December 1891; Waushara *Argus*, 1 December 1865; Green Bay *State Gazette*, 21 September 1867.

81. Ch. 133, *Private and Local Laws*, 1871; Ch. 109, *Private and Local Laws*, 1860; Columbus *Democrat*, 9 December 1876; *Eau Claire Free Press*, 22 July 1869; Lilly M. E. Borreson, *op. cit.*, p. 40; *Neenah Daily Times*, 25 May 1883; Two Rivers *Manitowoc County Chronicle*, 15 December 1891; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 6 May 1854, 20 April 1866; *Brandon Times*, 21 November 1868; Beaver Dam *Dodge County Citizen*, 11 September 1884; Eau Claire *Free Press*, 7 December 1874; Fond

du Lac Weekly Commonwealth, 13 November 1867; Janesville Daily Recorder, 20 February 1883; Kenosha Telegraph-Courier, 19 March 1896; Milwaukee Sentinel, 5 March 1867; Milwaukee Daily News, 26 December 1871; Waukesha Freeman, 12 April 1894; Sheboygan Falls Sheboygan County News, 20 May 1885; Janesville Gazette, 24 October 1877; Milwaukee Sentinel, 5 March 1867; History of Dodge County, Wisconsin, p. 511; Menomonie Dunn County News, 3 January 1874; Eau Claire Free Press, 15 August 1872.

82. Eau Claire Free Press, 17 December 1874; Louis Falge, op. cit., I: 366; Green Bay State Gazette, 21 September 1867; Columbus Democrat, 3 February 1877; Superior Evening Telegraph, op. cit., Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 6 May 1854; Milwaukee Sentinel, 5 March 1867.

83. Fond du Lac Weekly Commonwealth, 13 November 1867; Ripon Commonwealth, 17 February 1893; Fond du Lac Weekly Commonwealth, 10 April 1873; Waushara Argus, 1 December 1865; Sheboygan Herald, 13 March 1897.

84. Beaver Dam Dodge County Citizen, 11 September 1884; New London Press, 27 December 1894; Two Rivers Manitowoc County Chronicle, 14, 28 October 1890, 27 January 1891.

85. Marinette Eagle, 25 December 1875; Sheboygan Herald, 12 November 1880; Sheboygan Times, 13 November 1880; Neenah Daily Times, 30 April, 15 May, 18 September, 29 October 1883; Young Men's Association of the City of Milwaukee, "Sketch of the History of the Association," in: Catalogue of the Library . . . (Milwaukee, 1861) p. 13; Baraboo Weekly Bulletin, 3 February 1882; Baraboo Republic, 28 June, 22 November 1882; Wisconsin Prihibitionist and Baraboo Bulletin, 30 June 1882.

86. Columbus Democrat, 30 January 1901; Oshkosh Daily Northwestern, 10 January 1884. See also the Annual Reports of the Milwaukee Y. M. A., in the Daily News or the Sentinel, in the first week of each May, 1850-1877.

87. The largest library in the State was that of the State Historical Society, but a precise count of the Society's holdings is impossible to obtain.

Chapter 5

1. op. cit., III: 329.

2. The survival of the Waupun Library Association for nearly half a century was owed primarily to the efforts and interest of one man: Edwin Hillyer, a Waupun attorney, who served the Association as Clerk and Librarian, or at least from 1859-1880. The library also was located in his office. The History of Dodge County Wisconsin, p. 511.

3. W. M. Tompkins, 16 April 1908 entry in Minute Book of the Ashland Library Association, in the Vaughn Public Library, Ashland. (A microfilm copy of the Minutes is in the State Historical Society, Madison; Ashland Press, 6, 7, December 1872.

4. Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, History of Barron County, Wisconsin (Minneapolis: N. C. Cooper, Jr. & Co., 1922) p. 1105.

5. Baraboo Republic, 22 November 1882, 2 June 1897; Brandon Times, 2 January 1869; Fond du Lac Daily Commonwealth, 17 May 1868; Janesville Gazette, 2 December 1863, 13 November 1871, 26 January 1877; LaCrosse Democrat, 17 January 1854; Milwaukee Sentinel, 24 August 1876 (with reference to the Germania Society, a German-American equivalent to the Y. M. A.); The History of Waukesha County (Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1880) p. 707 (with reference to the 1870 Oconomowoc Library Association); Oshkosh Daily Northwestern, 3 April 1890; Sheboygan Falls Sheboygan County News, 20 May 1885.

6. Baraboo Republic, 2 June 1897; Fond du Lac Weekly Commonwealth, 30 May 1866; Green Bay State Gazette, 14 September 1867; Janesville Gazette, 1, 6 December 1871; Milwaukee Sentinel, 18 May 1874, 6 April, 1, 2 May 1877; Sheboygan Falls Sheboygan County News, 4 March 1885; Wisconsin Journal of Education, 27: 102 (May 1897. The reference was to the Stevens Point Library Association.); Memoirs of Vernon County, p. 105.

7. Eau Claire Free Press, 17 December 1854, 7 December 1871, 27 December 1877; Alfred Brunson letter to Lyman C. Draper, on the condition of the Prairie du Chien Literary and Library Association, in: Wisconsin. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tenth Annual Report, 1858, p. 222.

8. Baraboo Republic, 22 November 1882.

9. Janesville Gazette, 12 March 1881.

10. Milwaukee Sentinel, 24, 25 August 1876. The report of Germania's difficulties makes it apparent that in Gilded Age America for an association to be in debt was regarded as just as unhealthy and abnormal as it was for individuals.

11. Sheboygan Falls Sheboygan County News, 29 April 1896. In Fond du Lac in 1868 a young men's literary society went under, reputedly because it was unable to withstand the competition from a nearby skating rink. Daily Commonwealth, 17 May 1868.

12. Janesville Gazette, 6 December 1871.

13. Ibid., 13 November 1, 6 December 1871.

14. Ch. 140, Laws of Wisconsin, 1872; Janesville Gazette, 19 April, 3, 13, 17 May 1872. The court order is reported in the Gazette, 13 August 1872. Ch. 37, Laws of Wisconsin, 1873.

15. Janesville Gazette, 7, 9, March, 2, 9 December 1874, 13 January 1875, 19 April 1876.

16. Ibid., 20 January 1877, 30 June 1874, 23 January, 27 July 1875, 15, 19, 24 March, 18 May, 24 October 1877, 12 June 1879.

17. Ibid., 12 March 1881, 21 February, 8 July 1882. The events of 1882 are given more detailed coverage in a subsequent chapter.

18. Ibid., 19 April 1876, 20 January 1877, 7, 9 March 1874, 29 November 1877.

19. Milwaukee Sentinel, 7 December 1850; "Sketch of the History of the Association," op. cit.; Milwaukee Sentinel, 2 May 1866, 8 May 1867; Milwaukee Daily News, 9 August, 27 December 1871; Milwaukee Sentinel, 8 August, 27 December 1871; Milwaukee Daily News, 24 November, 24 December 1871; Milwaukee Sentinel, 21, 24 November, 24 December 1871; Milwaukee Daily News, 16 December 1871, 16 January, 13 February 1872.

20. Ibid., 5 May 1875. 3 May 1876, 1 May 1877.

21. Ibid., 6 April 1877; Milwaukee Sentinel, 1, 2 May 1877.

22. Ibid., 4, 5, 9 May 1877.

23. Milwaukee *Daily News*, 12, 17 May 1877; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 14, 13 May, 7 June, 11 July 1877.

24. *Ibid.*, 10 September, 21, 22 November 1877; Milwaukee *Daily News*, 9 September 1877; Milwaukee *Evening Wisconsin*, 10 September 1877.

25. K. M. Hutchinson, first President of the Oshkosh Library Association, in Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 19 December 1889. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 17 January 1884, 19 December 1889, 1 September 1900.

26. *Ibid.*, 10, 15, 17 January 1884, 19 December 1889, 19 June 1898, 1 September 1900.

27. *Ibid.*, 16, 9, 19, 24 December 1889, 8 January, 2 April 1890.

28. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 13, 27 April 1890, 13 May 1892; Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 10 April 1890, 19 June 1898, 1 September 1900.

29. Sheboygan *Times*, 13 October 1880.

30. *Ibid.*, 13 October, 3 November 1883; Sheboygan *Herald*, 12 November 1880. The same issue carried the S. L. A. "Articles of Association." Sheboygan *Times*, 28 June 1884, 12 September 1885. The *Times* of 13 December 1884 announced the meeting would be held on 15 December; none of the Sheboygan papers carried a report of the meeting. Sheboygan Falls *Sheboygan County News*, 4 March, 6 May 1885; Sheboygan *Times*, 16 May 1885.

31. Sheboygan Falls *Sheboygan County News*, 20 May, 29 July 1885; Sheboygan *Times*, 11 September 1885; Sheboygan Falls *Sheboygan County News*, 26 September 1885.

32. Sheboygan *Times*, 11 September 1885; *Sheboygan County News*, 20 May, 29 July, 9, 26 September 1885, 1 December 1886; Sheboygan *Times*, 11 September 1885.

33. Mrs. L. R. Jones, "The Howard Library Association," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 23: 304-07 (March 1940).

34. Janesville *Gazette*, 4, 11 November 1882; Janesville *Daily Recorder*, 11 November 1882; Two Rivers *Manitowoc County Chronicle*, 26 January 1892; Baraboo *Republic*, 25 September, 16 October 1895; Baraboo *Evening News*, 5 October 1895, 3 Auguat 1897.

35. Milwaukee Sentinel, 6 May 1863. Two facts should be recalled; it was at about this time that the number of Association members began to decrease, and it was the 1870 Census which revealed that one third of Milwaukee's people were of German birth or ancestry. By way of contrast, the Milwaukee Musical Society was largely German in its membership, but a significant number of Y. M. A. officers also were officers in the Musical Society - - such as John Nazro, John Black, Robert M. Menzies and Loyal Durand. Milwaukee Sentinel, 6 May 1863, 4 May 1868, 2 May 1870; Oshkosh Labor Advocate, 21, 28 March 1895; Oshkosh Daily Northwestern, 1 April 1895.

36. Prof. Butler's lecture is in the Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 1 June 1875. He appeared also in Baraboo on behalf of the Baraboo Library Association; Baraboo Weekly Bulletin, 17 February 1882. Accounts of the work by Hutchins, Stearns and Thwaites may be found in: C. L. Lord, Clio's Servant (Madison: S. H. S. W., 1968) pp. 169-70; J. M. Ware, op. cit., I: 235; Fort Atkinson Jefferson County Union, 27 May 1892; Beloit Daily Free Press, 21 February 1895; Milwaukee Sentinel, 8 August 1897, 26 January 1896; Racine Journal, 25, 26 January 1896.

37. Superior Leader, 5 August 1891; Sheboygan Herald, 30 January, 20 February, 13 March 1897; Sheboygan Falls Sheboygan County News, 3 February 1897; Wisconsin. Free Library Commission, Fourth Biennial Report, 1902, p. 1.

38. Sheboygan Falls Sheboygan County News, 24 February 1897; Sheboygan Herald, 13, 27 February 1897; Sheboygan Times, 20 February 1897. The Mead Will was contested, and the case was not decided until 1903.

39. Menomonie Dunn County News, 7 April 1876; Franklyn Curtiss-Wedge, History of Dunn County, Wisconsin (Minneapolis: N. C. Cooper, Jr. and Co., 1922) p. 120; Memoirs of Vernon County, p. 186.

40. Two Rivers Manitowoc County Chronicle, 10, 24 January, 21 February 1893; Samuel F. Pedrick, A History of Ripon, Wisconsin (Ripon: Ripon Historical Society, 1964) pp. 219-20.

41. Two Rivers Manitowoc County Chronicle, 19 January, 15 March, 12 April, 18 October, 15 November 1892.

42. Sparta Herald, 5, 19 May 1874; Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 23 November 1874, 1 June 1876; Eau Claire Free Press, 24 June 1875; Eau Claire News, 8 July 1876; Menomonie Dunn County News, 18 March, 8 April 1876; Fond du Lac Journal, 12, 19 October, 16 November, 14 December 1876.

43. Janesville Gazette, 4 April 1883; Beaver Dam Argus, 17 July, 28 August, 27 November 1884, 15 January, 12 April 1885; "The History of a Model Library," Library Journal, 21: 182 (April 1896).

Chapter 6

1. There is no single source with a complete record of such gifts. The early *Reports* of the Free Library Commission are valuable for the last decade of the century, but for prior years finding the records is a matter of searching in the State's newspapers. The phrase "the last third of the century" is used because the writer has found no record of gifts, except books, before 1868.

2. Jesse H. Shera, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-04.

3. See, for example, the Baraboo *Sauk County Democrat*, 28 January 1882. The details of Colonel Robbins' gift are related in the Janesville *Gazette*, 4 November 1882, 1 May 1883. But, see also the negative response to Dr. Charles Swan's offer to the Beaver Dam Library Association in August 1884, in the Beaver Dam *Argus* and *Dodge County Citizen*, 28 August 1884.

4. The record of Wisconsin gifts has been compiled from the first four *Reports* of the Free Library Commission, 1896-1902, and a variety of newspapers; the amount given by Andrew Carnegie is from George S. Bobinski, *Andrew Carnegie's Role in American Public Library Development* (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, c1967) p. 17. There were sixty-one Carnegie gifts to sixty Wisconsin cities.

5. Wisconsin. Free Library Commission, *Fourth Report*, 1902. pp. 3-5; *Fifth Report*, 1904, p. 71; *Sixth Report*, 1906, p. 64.

6. Beaver Dam *Argus*, 1 May 1890.

7. *Ibid*.

8. See, for example, Rush Welter, *Popular Education and Democratic Thought in America* (N. Y.: Columbia University Press, 1956), esp. Chapters II and III; and Robert H. Bremner, *American Philanthropy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960) p. 44.

9. See the *Daily Northwestern*, 1 December 1889-3 April 1890, esp. the editorial of 19, 24 December, 11, 28 February and 29 March.

10. 14 March 1890; Beloit *Daily Free Press*, 5 November 1894.

11. Baraboo *Evening News*, 4 October 1895.

12. *Ibid.*, Kenosha *Telegraph-Courier*, 31 October 1895, Kenosha *Evening News*, 7 November 1895; *Library Journal*, 21: 182 (April 1896).

13. Benton H. Wilcox, The *Wisconsin Library Association, 1891 - 1966* (Madison, 1966) p. 2, says Theresa West, Assistant in the Milwaukee Public Library, was first, in 1882, but the 1885 A. L. A. membership list shows Linderfelt as a member since 1880, in *Library Journal*, 10: 353 (September-October 1885).

14. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 10 June 1886; *Library Journal*, 11: 390-91 (November 1806).

15. B. H. Wilcox, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-4; Lutie E. Stearns, "The Wisconsin Library Association," *Library Journal*, 21: 189 (April 1896).

16. *Ibid*.

17. Wisconsin Library Association, *Minutes*, 11 February 1891. The *Minutes* are in the Archives of the W. L. A. at the State Historical Society, Madison.

18. *Ibid.*; *Library Journal*, 16: 81 (March 1891). The Constitution of the N. Y. State Library Association is in *Library Journal*, 15: 212 (July 1890). W. L. A. members could work their will in a negative fashion: the inadequate dues were not increased until 1918, and then only to one dollar. The next increase did not come until 1946. B. H. Wilcox, *op. cit.*, pp. 18, 32.

19. Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 12 March 1891; Milwaukee *Journal*, 12 March 1891.

20. *Library Journal*, 21: 189 (April 1896).

21. Milwaukee Sentinel, 13 March 1891; Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, and Milwaukee *Journal*, 12 March 1891; *Library Journal*, 16: 115 (April 1891).

22. Madison *Wisconsin State Journal*, 12 March 1891. Thwaites' topic was one on which he felt keenly. See C. L. Lord *op. cit.*, pp. 113-18. Milwaukee *Journal*, 12 March 1891; *Library Journal*, 16: 115 (April 1891). With Hutchins holding two offices, the Association was in technical violation of its own Constitution; no one seemed to care.

23. Partial summaries of the event are to be found in B. H. Wilcox, op. cit., pp. 5-6; and Library Journal, 17: 183, 250 (May and July 1892). Detailed accounts are in the Milwaukee Journal and Sentinel, 28 April 1892, et. seq. The quotation is from Wilcox, p. 6.

24. W. L. A. Minutes, 4 July 1894; B. H. Wilcox, op. cit., p. 7; Library Journal, 19: 173 (August 1894).

25. Beaver Dam Argus, 21 August 1884. Hutchins' emphasis.

26. Lutie E. Stearns, "My Seventy-five Years." Wisconsin Magazine of History, 43: 103 (Winter, 1959-1960). The Wisconsin State Journal and the Democrat comments are quoted in the eulogy to Hutchins in Wisconsin Library Bulletin, 10: 15-16 (February 1914).

27. The testimonials by McCarthy and others are in the manuscript volume, Frank Hutchins, His Worth and Work, in the State Historical Society. For other estimates of his influence see: Merle E. Curti and Vernon W. Carstenson, The University of Wisconsin: a History, 1848-1925 (Madison, 1948-1949), II: 553-57; and E. M. Rosentreter, The Boundaries of the Campus (Madison, 1957) pp. 47-52.

28. Wisconsin Library Bulletin, 10: 14 (February 1914).

29. Frank A. Hutchins, The Free City Library as a Department of City Government (Madison, 1902) pp. 3-4 (also in: Wisconsin. Free Library Commission, Fourth Biennial Report, 1902); Wisconsin Library Bulletin, 10:7-8 (February 1914).

30. Ibid., pp. 13-15; Charles R. Van Hise, "The Background of the Library School," Wisconsin Library Bulletin, 17: 121 (May 1931).

31. Lutie E. Stearns, "My Seventy-five Years, Part I," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 42: 211 (Spring 1959).

32. "My Seventy-five Years, Part III," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 43: 97 (Winter 1959-1960).

33. Earl Tannenbaum, "The Library Career of Lutie E. Stearns," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 39: 162 (Spring 1956).

34. "My Seventy-five Years, Part I," op. cit., p. 216.

35. Ibid., p. 215; Lutie E. Stearns, "The Child and the Small Library," Wisconsin. Free Library Commission, Second Biennial Report, 1898, p. 12.

36. "My Seventy-five Years, Part I" op. cit., p. 213.

37. Lutie E. Stearns, "The Library an Educator," Beloit Daily Free Press, 21 February 1895; "The Child and the Small Library," op. cit., p. 13.

38. The State Journal comment was quoted in the Menomonie Dunn County News, 2 December 1904; Adele Maries Shaw, "The Ideal Schools of Menomonie," World's Work, 7: 4548 (March 1904).

39. Ann M. Keppel and James I. Clark, "James H. Stout and the Menomonie Schools," Wisconsin Magazine of History, 42: 203 (Spring 1959); Ibid., p. 202.

40. Information on Stout's life is sparse. Other than the sources already cited see: Dictionary of Wisconsin in Biography; Milwaukee Sentinel, 9 December 1910; Wisconsin Blue Book, 1909; and John G. Gregory, West Central Wisconsin (4 vols., Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1932) passim.

41. Frank A. Hutchins, in an address to the Chicago Library Club, reported in Library Journal, 20: 393 (November 1895); Reuben Gold Thwaites, quoted in the Baraboo Evening News, 5 December 1895.

42. Library Journal, 21: 188 (April 1896); B. H. Wilcox, op. cit., p. 9; Ibid.,; loc. cit.

43. Wisconsin Journal of Education, 25: 22 (January 1895).

44. Library Journal, 21: 188 (April 1896); See especially the issues for February, September and December 1895.

45. Library Journal, 21: 188 (April 1896); "My Seventy-five Years, Part I," op. cit., p. 216.

46. Wisconsin, Senate, 1895. Bill No. 332.

47. Library Journal, 21: 190 (April 1896); Ibid., p. 188;

48. Library Journal, 21: 188 (April 1896); Wisconsin. Senate. Journal, 1895, p. 582; Wisconsin. Assembly. Journal, 1895, p. 1047.

49. Wisconsin Free Library Commission. First Biennial Report, 1896, p. 7.

50. B. H. Wilcox, op. cit., p. 10; Despite his official title of Corresponding Secretary and the existence of a subordinate with the title Librarian Thwaites was closely involved in the operation and development of the Historical Society Library. He was gifted in the field of collection development.

51. "My Seventy-five Years, Part I," *op. cit.*, p. 216. Indeed, the Free Library Commission never did achieve an adequate political base, and when it was terminated in 1965 there was hardly a murmur of protest from the State, so little of a vested interest had been created. The Commission was one of the very few government agencies ever to go out of existence at its own volition, and the writer was at the meeting in June 1965 when the Secretary presented the Staff's plan for elimination of the Commission. Of the two dozen or so librarians present only two spoke against the idea.

52. *Library Journal*, 21: 188 (April 1896); Hutchins to the *Chicago Library Club*, op. cit., p. 393.

53. Wisconsin. Free Library Commission. *First Biennial Report*, 1896, pp. 5-7.

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

55. *Ibid.*, p. 8. In discussing the early years of the Commission one is handicapped by the lack of directly relevant sources. There are no Commission archives for 1895-1904, other than biennial reports and a very few other materials. The Commission's own records were lost when the Capitol burned in 1904.

56. Wisconsin. Senate, 1897. Bill No. 4.

57. The Act became law on 24 April 1897. Wisconsin. Senate. *Journal*, 1897, pp. 666, 679, 941, 1005; Wisconsin. Assembly. *Journal*, 1897, p. 1162.

58. Wisconsin. Free Library Commission, *Second Biennial Report*, 1898, pp. 36-37.

59. B. H. Wilcox, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

Chapter 7

1. The New Englanders and their cohorts who wrote Wisconsin's Constitution were firm devotees of town government, with only a minimum of guidance - - or, interference - - by country or State. Schools, roads, and many other facilities and services were established under town jurisdiction; and in some important respects even city wards were, in effect, towns: in Milwaukee, Janesville, Oshkosh and other places the schools, street maintenance, police and other facilities and services were established within ward jurisdiction. The extent to which such thinking complicated nineteenth century urban development is problematical, but it was a significant factor.

2. Madison Wisconsin State Journal, 23 November 1874, 1, 15 April 1875; "A Fiftieth Anniversary," Wisconsin in Library Bulletin, 20: 176-79 (July 1925).

3. Milwaukee Daily News, 9 September, 25 October 1877; Milwaukee Sentinel, 10 September, 21, 23 November, 29 December 1877, 12 March 1878; Milwaukee. Common Council, Proceedings, 1877-1878, p. 161; Helen E. Vaeth, The Origin of the Milwaukee Public Library, 1966 (ms. paper at the Milwaukee Public Library), pp. 24-26.

4. Eau Claire Free Press, 17 December 1874, 24 June 1875, 8 July 1876.

5. The legislative history of 121, S. may be found in the 1876 Journals of the Assembly and Senate, and also on manuscript copies of the Bill in the State Archives. It was unusual, although not unknown, for either House to accept amendments without record of their sources.

6. Fond du Lac Journal, and Commonwealth, 12 October 1876.

7. History of Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin (Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1880) pp. 608-10; Fond du Lac Commonwealth, 12, 19 October 1876; Fond du Lac Journal, 12, 19 October, 9, 16 November 1876; History of Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, p. 611.

8. Janesville Gazette, 1, 6, 19 December 1871, 8, 19 April, 8 May 1872, 24 April 1873.

9. Ibid., 24 January, 24 April, 23 October, 3, 9, 17, 20 December 1873, 4 January 1874.

10. *Ibid.*, 27 February, 5, 7, 9, 27, 28 March 1874, 8, 13, 23 January 1875.

11. *Ibid.*, 7, 8, 10, 23 January 1875. There were no references to the L. T. U. Reading Room in the Janesville press after 27 May 1875.

12. Janesville *Gazette*, 12, 15, 24 March 1877.

13. *Ibid.*, 17, 29 March, 25 April 1877.

14. *Ibid.*, 12, 16 March 1881, 6 January, 21 February 1882.

15. Janesville *Daily Recorder*, 8 July 1882; *Gazette*, 30 August, 1, 4, 6, 7, 8 September 1882.

16. Janesville *City Times*, 7 September 1882; *Daily Recorder*, 7, 9 September 1882.

17. Janesville *Gazette*, 6 September 1882; *Daily Recorder*, 6 September 1882. Emphasis in the published text.

18. Janesville *Gazette*, 28 September, 4, 13 November 1882; *Daily Recorder*, 11 November 1882.

19. Janesville *Gazette*, 9, 13 December 1882; *Daily Recorder*, 8 December 1882.

20. Janesville *Gazette*, and *Daily Recorder*, 13 February 1883. The text of the City Attorney's remarks was published in the *Gazette*. Janesville *Gazette*, 18 February, 4 April 1883; *Daily Recorder*, 18 February 1883. Of the letters and editorials the most remarkable was an editorial in the *City Times* of 29 March - a 24 line statement quite restrained in enthusiasm: "We have been requested to say a word in favor of the proposition, and we certainly shall say nothing against it;" and a letter by "Workingman" in the 30 March *Daily Recorder*. The latter may well have been spurious. It reads as though it were a parody of a workingman's letter; its principal argument was that the "bloated bondholders" were opposed to free books for workers, therefore, the "horny-handed sons of toil" must vote for the library.

21. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 10 January 1884.

22. *Ibid.*, 6 December 1889.

23. *Ibid.*, 18 December 1889.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 18, 19, 20, 24, 26 December 1889, 8, 27 January, 11, 18, 22, 28 February 3, 13, 18, 28, 29 March 1890.

26. The requests for citizen contributions were published in the *Daily Northwestern*, 24 and 28 December 1889.

27. There are no citations to specific editorials, as these points were iterated frequently; almost all of the editorials mentioned one or more of them.

28. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 24 December 1889.

29. *Ibid.*, 26, 28 December 1889.

30. *Ibid.*, 8, 27 January 1890.

31. The *Daily Northwestern*, the most widely read paper in Oshkosh, customarily carried two or three letters a day on local subjects, and its reporters frequently were sent out to interview public figures on these same matters. Oshkosh *Times*, 9, 16, 20 February 1890; *Daily Northwestern*, 11, 18, 22 February 1890.

32. The exact tally was not published, although it was reported that 60 per cent of the voters on this issue; Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 2, 3 April 1890.

33. Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 13, 27 April 1890.

34. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 4 March, 28 June 1895, 19 June 1898; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 11 March 1895.

35. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 4 March, 28 June 1895, 19 June 1898; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 11 March 1895; Oshkosh *Labor Advocate*, 21 March 1895; *Daily Northwestern*, 16, 19, 25, 27 March 1895; *Weekly Times*, 29 March 1895.

36. Oshkosh *Labor Advocate*, 21, 28 March 1895; *Daily Northwestern*, 26, 29, 30 March, 2 April 1895; *Weekly Times*, 23 March 1895; Oshkosh *Telegraph*, 28 March 1895; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 24 March 1895.

37. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 26, 29, 30 March, 1, 2 April 1895. The *Northwestern* even described the public library project as "practical socialism," which for it was a long step, indeed.

38. The tally was: 1st ward: 139-22; 2: 180-65; 3d: 101-33; 4th: 302-52; 5th: 274-31; 6th: 75-71; 7th: 245-16; 8th: 132-42; 9th: 128-53; 10th: 219-45; 11th: 80-23; 12th: 127-13; 13th: 128-134. *Daily Northwestern*, 3 April 1895.

39. *Ibid*.

40. *Ibid*., 3, 4 April 1895; *Labor Advocate*, 5 April 1895.

41. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 5, 9 April 1895; *Weekly Times*, 13 April 1895.

42. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 9 April 1895; *Weekly Times*, 6, 13 April 1895. The latter editorial was not published until two days after the Council postponed the Kimball resolution. However, the *Times* was a Saturday afternoon paper, and it is obvious that much of the editorial cited above was set in type before the Thursday (11 April) Council meeting. It is obvious also that Halsey had disclosed his plan to some of the library committee before its 8 April meeting with the Finance Committee.

43. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 19 April 1895.

44. *Ibid*., 23, 30 April, 15, 17 May 1895; *Weekly Times*, 18 May 1895.

45. Oshkosh *Daily Northwestern*, 21, 25, 27-29 May 1895; *Weekly Times*, 13 May 1895.

46. The tally was: 1st ward: 99-15; 2d: 145-60; 3d: 70-36; 4th: 166-50; 5th: 231-26; 6th: 25-193; 7th: 205-14; 8th: 84-75; 9th: 76-108; 10th: 141-21; 11th: 66-45; 12th: 145-25; 13th: 124-192. *Daily Northwestern*, 30 May 1895.

47. *Ibid*., 30 May, 28 June, 2 October 1895; Milwaukee *Sentinel*, 22 August 1897.

48. It is a matter that requires more intensive investigation, but it appears to be a fact that in Oshkosh the North European immigrant groups were engaged in a strong challenge to the New Englanders. Partisan differences and contrasting economic ideologies served to obscure the ethnic factors in the contest. It was during this same decade that Robert M. LaFollette, Sr., was engaged in building the Progressive faction of the Republican Party, and preparing for reconstruction of the Executive branch of the State Government. The ethnic contributions to the Progressive movement have not been adequately studied, but Scandanavian and German elements were quite strong in Progressivism, and the Republican "Stalwarts" received much of their leadership from Yankee elements in Milwaukee and the Fox Valley, especially from the industrial cities along the lower Fox - - Oshkosh, Fond du Lac, Appleton and Green Bay. It is sure, however, that the Progressives were relatively uninterested in the public library as an instrument for public education or enlightenment.

49. Two Rivers Manitowoc County Chronicle, 8 April 1892.

50. Ibid., 15 December 1891, 2 February, 8, 15, 29 March, 12, 19 April, 25 October, 8 November, 13 December 1892.

51. Waukesha Freeman, 15 March 1894.

52. Ibid., 12, 19, 26 April, 3 May 1894; Waukesha Dispatch, 12, 19, 26 April, 3 May 1894.

53. Ibid., 19 April 1894; Freeman, 26 April 1894.

54. Waukesha Dispatch, 12, 19, 26 April, 3 May 1894, 31 May 1895; Freeman, 15, 29 March, 12, 19, 24, 26 April, 3 May 1894.

55. W. M. Brittan, in Beloit Daily Free Press, 11 May 1893; Ibid., 23 March, 11 May 1893.

56. Ibid., 18 September, 9, 16, 19, 27 October, 1, 5, 6, 7, 9 November 1894.

57. In the third ward the library proposition carried by only a bit more than two-to-one, compared to a three-to-one or greater margin in the other wards. Ibid., 10, 13, 20, 27 November 1894, 6 July 1895.

58. Ibid., 18, 19, 21 December 1894, 8 January 1895.

Chapter 8

1. Not even the U. S. Bureau of the Census could cope with the situation. By 1900 the Bureau had adopted the euphemism "urban places" for municipalities with a population of more than 2,500.

2. The immigrants' non-involvement with the public library movement does need further study, probably in several cities in the upper Great Lakes region. It is a puzzling phenomenon, and not entirely in keeping with immigrant behavior. Immigrant groups in Wisconsin, for example, were quick to organize their own militia companies, such as the Washington Artillery of Milwaukee, a German organization founded in 1846.

3. A similar development occurred in Superior in 1891 when the Young People's Society of the Swedish Lutheran Church established a "public library" with books imported from Sweden.

4. The changes which were occurring in America may well have been a source of confusion and doubt for many native Americans, but there is a special irony in the remarks of Judge Arthur MacArthur, a Yankee patriarch, to the Young Men's Association of Milwaukee, in which he celebrated the book-based virtues of the people of Goethe, and in the next breath derogated the ignorant, book-deprived people of Dante.

5. These difference have not been studied adequately. We do not know, for example, the comparative conditions of telegraphic development in Wisconsin and, say, New Hampshire; nor do we know enough about their effect on the development of either State.

6. On this point the record will not support the ascription of specific causes. For example, we cannot learn from the record why the Milwaukee Young Men's Association did not develop an organization as the Boston Athenaeum. Certainly there was in Milwaukee sufficient wealth for the maintenance of the Association; its failure appears to have been caused more by a lack of will than by a lack of resources, but that is speculation rather than history.

7. On this point see: Carl B. Gustavson, The Institutional Drive (Athens, O.: Ohio University Press, 1966), especially Chapter 1, "The Peasant in Wonderland."

8. In the twentieth century many of the head librarians became officers of their boards as well, usually the Secretaries.

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APPENDIX I

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS OF WISCONSIN, 1836-1900

Column 1: Place.

2: Date of organization.

3: Population at time first association organized (to nearest census).

4: Name of library or association.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Altoona	1891	805	W.A. Scott Free Library
Antigo	1897	5,145	Antigo Free Library
Antigo	1897		Antigo Library Ass'n.
Ashland	1872	(unk.)	Ashland Library Ass'n.
Ashland	1888		Vaughn Library Ass'n.
Bakersville	(unk.)	(unk.)	Ladies' Library Ass'n.
Baraboo	1880	3,266	Baraboo Free Library
Baraboo	1882		Baraboo Library Ass'n.
Baraboo	1895		Baraboo Library Ass'n.
Baraboo	1897		Baraboo Library Ass'n.
Bayfield	1875	1,032	Bayfield Library Ass'n.
Bayfield	1883		Bayfield Library Ass'n.
Beaver Dam	1884	4,184	Beaver Dam Library Ass'n.
Belleville	1890	319	Belleville Library Ass'n.
Beloit	1847	2,726	Mechanics' Library Ass'n.

(1)	(2)		(4)
Beloit	1866		Beloit Library Ass'n.
Black River Falls	1871	(unk.)	Black River Falls Library Ass'n.
Blue Mounds	1889	1,449	Blue Mounds Library Ass'n.
Brandon	1868	600*	Brandon Library Ass'n.
Campbellsport	1890	(unk.)	Ashford & Auburn Union Free Library Ass'n.
Cassville	1853	(unk.)	[illegible]dies' Library Ass'n.
Chetek	1888	406	Chetek Library Ass'n.
Clintonville	1892	1,466	Clintonville Free Library Ass'n.
Colby	1879	813	Colby Library Ass'n.
Colfax	1899	1,083	Colfax Library Ass'n.
Columbus	1877	1,876	Library Ass'n. of Columbus
Cumberland	1898	1,328	Cumberland Library Ass'n.
Dallas	1888	1,033	Dallas Library Ass'n.
Deerfield	1898	1,104	Deerfield Free Library Ass'n.
De Pere	1878	1,954	De Pere Public Library Ass'n.
Downing	1899	(unk.)	Downing Library Ass'n.
Durand	1898	1,458	Durand Library Ass'n.
Eau Claire	1860	628	Eau Claire Library Ass'n.
Eau Claire	1869		Citizens' Library Ass'n.
Eau Claire	1874		Eau Claire Library Ass'n.
Edgerton	1872	(unk.)	Edgerton Library Ass'n.
Elkhart Lake	1895	392	Elkhart Lake Library
Evansville	1899	1,864	Evansville Public Library

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Florence	1895(?)	1,551	Florence Free Public Library
Fond du Lac	1852	2,014	Union Library Ass'n.
Fond du Lac	1853		Fond du Lac Library Ass'n.
Fond du Lac	1857		Franklin Library Ass'n.
Fond du Lac	1864		Young Men's Ass'n. of Fond du Lac
Fond du Lac	1866		Young Men's Literary Ass'n.
Fond du Lac	1867		Neocosmian Society
Footeville	(unk.)	(unk.)	Footeville Library Ass'n.
Fort Atkinson	1875	(unk.)	Ft. Atkinson Literary Society
Fort Atkinson	1890		Ft. Atkinson Library Ass'n.
Fort Howard	1875	3,610	Ft. Howard Literary Society
Gilmanton	1865	500*	Howard Library Ass'n.
Glenbeulah	1890(?)	(unk.)	Library Ass'n.
Green Bay	1867	4,666	Green Bay Library Ass'n.
Hartland	1897	629	Hartland Library Ass'n.
Horicon	1868	(unk.)	Horicon Library Ass'n.
Hudson	1856	1,560	Hudson Literary Ass'n.
Hudson	1874		Hudson Ladies' Library Ass'n.
Janesville	1863	7,703	Mechanics' Library Ass'n.
Janesville	1864		Young Men's Literary Union
Janesville	1865		Young Men's Ass'n of Janesville
Janesville	1882		Janesville Library Ass'n.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Jefferson	1855	2,006	Jefferson Institute
Kenosha	1895	8,122	Kenosha Public Library Ass'n.
Kewanee	1878(?)	1,050	Kewanee Library Ass'n.
Kilbourn	1893	1,207	Kilbourn City Library Ass'n.
LaCrosse	1853	543	LaCrosse Library Co.
LaCrosse	1868		Young Men's Library Ass'n.
Lake Geneva	1896	2,425	Lake Geneva Library Ass'n.
Lake Mills	1899	1,387	Lake Mills Library Ass'n.
Madison	1853	1,525	Madison Institute
Madison	1854		Madison Young Men's Ass'n.
Manitowoc	1856	3,055	Young Men's Institute
Manitowoc	1859		Manitowoc Library and Scientific Ass'n.
Manitowoc	1860		Young Men's Lyceum
Manitowoc	1868		Jones Library Ass'n.
Marinette	1875	(unk.)	Literary Society
Marshfield	1883	2,090	Marshfield Library Ass'n.
Mauston	1898	1,718	Mauston Circulating Library
Menasha	1895	6,154	Menasha Library Ass'n.
Menomonie	1874	3,433	Menomonie Literary Society
Menomonie	1874		Library and Reading Room Ass'n.
Merrill	1886	3,958	Merrill Library Ass'n.
Milwaukee	1846	20,061	Milwaukee Library Ass'n.
Milwaukee	1847		Young Men's Ass'n. of the City of Milwaukee

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Milwaukee	1868		South Side Literary & Library Ass'n.
Milwaukee	1871		Germania Ass'n.
Mineral Point	1867	3,275	Mineral Point Library Ass'n.
Mineral Point	1893		Mineral Point Free Public Library
Mukwonago	(unk.)	(unk.)	Mukwonago Library
Neenah	1859	1,296	Aletheon Institute
Neenah	1881		Neenah Library Ass'n.
Neillsville	1895	2,206	Neillsville Library Ass'n.
New London	1868	1,015	New London Library Ass'n.
New London	1895		New London Library Ass'n.
New Richmond	1890	1,408	New Richmond Library Ass'n.
North Greenfield	(unk.)	(unk.)	North Greenfield Library Ass'n,
Oconomowoc	1870	1,401	Oconomowoc Library Ass'n.
Oconomowoc	1893		Oconomowoc Library Ass'n.
Oshkosh	1854	(unk.)	Oshkosh Young Men's Ass'n.
Oshkosh	1856		Oshkosh Young Men's Ass'n.
Oshkosh	1869		Oshkosh Library Ass'n.
Oshkosh	1883		Brooklyn Reading Ass'n.
Phillips	1895	1,652	Phillips Library Ass'n.
Platteville	1868	2,537	Young Men's Library Ass'n.
Plymouth	1900	2,257	Plymouth Library Ass'n.
Plover	1899	1,611	Plover Library Ass'n.
Portage	1855	2,879*	Portage Young Men's Institute

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Portage	1874		Portage Library Ass'n.
Portage	1900		Free Public Library Ass'n.
Prairie du Chien	(unk.)	(unk.)	Literary and Library Ass'n.
Racine	1853	5,107	Racine Young Men's Ass'n.
Racine	1856		Racine Library Ass'n.
Racine	1868		Young Men's Ass'n of Racine
Racine	1883		Racine Library Ass'n.
Racine	(unk.)		German Young Men's Ass'n.
Reedsburg	1898	2,225	Library Committee
Rhinelander	1897	4,330	(unknown)
Richland Center	1898	2,321	Free Library Ass'n.
Ripon	1880	3,117	Ripon Library Ass'n.
Sheboygan	1880	7,314	Sheboygan Library Ass'n.
Sheboygan	1885		Sheboygan Library
Sheboygan	1897		Marquette Library Ass'n.
Sheboygan Falls	1878	1,148	Sheboygan Falls Library Ass'n.
Sparta	1861	1,284	Sparta Library Ass'n.
Sparta	1862		Sparta Young Men's Ass'n.
Sparta	1874		Sparta Library Ass'n.
Sparta	1899		Sparta Library Ass'n.
Stevens Point	1868	1,810	Stevens Point Library Ass'n.
Stoughton	1885	2,105	Stoughton Library Ass'n.
Sturgeon Bay	1866	690	Sturgeon Bay Library Ass'n.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Superior	1869	1,122	Superior Library Ass'n.
Token Creek	1891	(unk.)	Token Creek Free Library
Tomah	1881	1,245	Ladies' Library Ass'n.
Tomah	1886		Tomah Library Ass'n.
Tomahawk	(unk.)	(unk.)	Free Library Ass'n.
Two Rivers	1890	2,870	Joseph Mann Library Ass'n.
Viroqua	1866	(unk.)	Viroqua Library Ass'n.
Viroqua	1880		Viroqua Library Ass'n.
Waterloo	1866	727	Waterloo Reading Ass'n.
Waterloo	1871		Waterloo Library and Dramatic Ass'n.
Watertown	1854	1,451	Watertown Young Men's Library Ass'n.
Watertown	1857		Young Men's Ass'n of Watertown
Waukesha	1890	6,321	Beacon Lights Reading Circle
Waukesha	1896		Public Library Ass'n.
Waupaca	1899	2,912	Waupaca Library Ass'n.
Waupun	1858	865	Waupun Library Ass'n (later: Hillyer Library Ass'n.
Wausau	1870	1,349	Pine Knot Literary Club
Wausau	1878		Ladies' Literary Club
Wautoma	1865	(unk.)	Wautoma Library Ass'n.
Wauwautosa	1886	7,829	Harwood Library and Lecture Ass'n.
West Eau Claire	1868	(unk.)	West Eau Claire Library Ass'n.
Westfield	1895	230	Westfield Library

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Whitewater	1857	2,731	Whitewater Library Ass'n.
Whitewater	1884		Whitewater Library Ass'n.

* (explanatory notes). 1. Where population is listed as (unk.) it means that in the Census nearest to the date of organization of the library association the community was not listed. 2. Population of Brandon for 1868 is an estimate from Brandon Times, 10 January 1868. 3. Population of Gilmanton from 1865 is an estimate from L.R. Jones, *op. cit.* 4. Population of Portage at time of organization of the Institute (1855) is the 1860 Census figure; Portage was not in existence in 1850. 5. The State of Wisconsin conducted its own census in 1875, 1885, and 1895; many of the above figures are from one of those State Census publications.

APPENDIX II

ANNUAL RECORD OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS ORGANIZED IN WISCONSIN, 1836-1900

1836 - 0
1837 - 0
1838 - 0
1839 - 0
1840 - 0
1841 - 0
1842 - 0
1843 - 0
1844 - 0
1845 - 0
1846 - 1
1847 - 2
1848 - 0
1849 - 0
1850 - 0
1951 - 0

1852 - 1
1853 - 3
1854 - 3
1855 - 2
1856 - 4
1857 - 3
1858 - 2
1850 - 2
1860 - 2
1861 - 1
1862 - 1
1863 - 1
1864 - 2
1865 - 3
1866 - 5
1867 - 3

1868 - 10
1869 - 3
1870 - 2
1871 - 3
1872 - 2
1873 - 0
1874 - 6
1875 - 4
1876 - 0
1877 - 1
1878 - 4
1879 - 1
1880 - 5
1881 - 3
1882 - 2
1883 - 4

1884 - 3
1885 - 2
1886 - 3
1887 - 0
1888 - 3
1889 - 1
1890 - 7
1891 - 2
1892 - 1
1891 - 3
1894 - 0
1895 - 9
1896 - 2
1897 - 6
1898 - 6
1899 - 7

1900 - 2

APPENDIX III

DECENNIAL RECORD OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS ORGANIZED IN WISCONSIN, 1836 - 1900

To 1840 - 0
To 1850 - 3
To 1860 - 22
To 1870 - 31
To 1880 - 26
To 1890 - 28
To 1900 - 38

Number of Associations with unknown date of organization:5.

APPENDIX IV

CHARTERED LIBRARY ASSOCIATION IN WISCONSIN, 1836 - 1871

Place	Date	Name of Association	Charter Citation
Beloit	1847	Beloit Mechanics' Library Association	Laws of 1847, p. 66
Milwaukee	1852	Young Men's Ass'n of the City of Milwaukee	Ch. 97, P&L Laws, 1852
Cassville	1853	Ladies' Library Association	" 381, " " 1853
Madison	1853	Madison Institute	" 409, " " "
Madison	1854	Madison Young Men's Association	" 183, " " 1854
Oshkosh	1854	Oshkosh Young Men's Association	" 311, " " "
Racine	1854	Young Men's Association	" 100, " " "
Watertown	1854	Young Men's Library Association	" 189, " " "
Jefferson	1855	Jefferson Institute	" 202, " " 1855
Portage	1855	Portage Young Men's Institute	" 79, " " "
Hudson	1856	Hudson Literary Association	" 88, " " 1856
Manitowoc	1856	Young Men's Institute	" 384, " " "
Oshkosh	1856	Young Men's Association	" 183, " " "
Racine	1856	Racine Library Association	" 242, " " "
Watertown	1857	Young Men's Association	" 95, " " 1857
Manitowoc	1859	Library and Scientific Association	" 245, " " 1859

Place	Place	Name of Association	Charter Citation
Fond du Lac	1865	Young Men's Association	Ch. 50, P&L Laws, 1865
Janesville	1865	Young Men's Association	" 441, " " "
Beloit	1866	Beloit Library Association	" 190, " " "
SturgeonBay	1866	Sturgeon Bay Library Association	" 318, " " "
Waterloo	1866	Waterloo Reading Association	" 384, " " "
Fond du Lac	1867	Young Men's Literary Society	" 513, " " 1867
Green Bay	1867	Green Bay Library Association	" 446, " " "
MineralPoint	1867	Mineral Point Library Association	" 512, " " "
Brandon	1868	Brandon Library Association	" 362, " " "
Horicon	1868	Horicon Library Association	" 310, " " "
Manitowoc	1868	Jones Library Association	" 94, " " "
Milwaukee	1868	South Side Literary & Library Association	" 40, " " "
New London	1868	New London Library Association	" 63, " " "
Platteville	1868	Young Men's Library Association	" 106, " " "
Racine	1868	Young Men's Association	" 191, " " "
Oconomowoc	1870	Oconomowoc Library Association	" 109, " " "
Wausau	1870	Pine Knot Literary Club	" 75, " " "
Waterloo	1871	Waterloo Library and Dramatic Association	" 133, " " 1871

APPENDIX V

PROPERTY LIMITS AND RESTRICTIONS IN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CHARTERS

Association	Restriction: Yes	No	Limit
Beloit Mechanics' Library Association	x		$ 300 yr.
Beloit Library Association		x	50,000
Brandon Library Association		x	10,000
Cassville Ladies' Library Association		x	5,000
Fond du Lac Young Men's Association		x	70,000
Fond du Lac Young Men's Literary Society		x	10,000
Green Bay Library Association		x	25,000
Horicon Library Association		x	10,000
Hudson Literary Association		x	20,000
Janesville Young Men's Association		x	30,000
Jefferson Institute		x	70,000
Manitowoc, Jones Library Association	x		20,000
Manitowoc Library and Scientific Association		x	20,000
Manitowoc Young Men's Institute		x	20,000
Madison Institute		x	75,000

Association	Restriction: Yes	No	Limit
Madison Young Men's Association	x		$ 10,000
Milwaukee South Side Library and Literary Ass'n.	x		75,000
Milwaukee Young Men's Association		x	25,000
Mineral Point Library Association		x	none
New London Library Association		x	10,000

APPENDIX VI

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY ACT OF 1872

AN ACT authorizing cities and villages to establish free public libraries and reading rooms.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The city council of each incorporated city, not exceeding in population fifty thousand inhabitants, and the board of trustees of each incorporated village in this state, shall have power to establish and maintain a public library and reading room for the use and benefit of the inhabitants of such city or incorporated village, and may levy a tax not exceeding one mill on the dollar, on all taxable property of the city or village, for such purpose, to be known as the "library fund."

SECTION 2. When any common council or board of trustees shall have decided to establish and maintain a public library and reading room under this act, the mayor of such a city, or the president of such a village shall, with the approval of the common council or board of trustees, proceed to appoint a board of nine directors for the same, chosen from the citizens at large, with reference to their fitness for such office, and not more than one member of the city council or board of trustees shall be at any one time a member of said board of directors.

SECTION 3. Said directors shall hold office from their appointment, and one-third for one year, one-third for two years, and one-third for three years, from the first of July each year following their appointment, and at their first regular meeting shall cast lots for the respective terms, and annually thereafter the mayor of such city or the president of such village shall, before the first of July of each year, appoint, as before, three directors to take the place of the retiring directors, who shall hold their office for three years, and until their successors are appointed.

SECTION 4. Vacancies in the board of directors, occasioned by removal, resignation or otherwise, shall be reported by the board to the city council or board of trustees, and be filled in like manner as the original appointments, and no director shall receive any compensation as such.

SECTION 5. Said directors shall, immediately after the appointment, meet and organize by the election of one of their number president, and by the election of such other officers as they may deem necessary. They shall make and adopt such by-laws, rules and regulations for their own guidance and for the government of the library and reading room as may be expedient, not inconsistent with this act. They shall have the exclusive control of the expenditures of all moneys collected to the library fund, and of the supervision, care and custody of the rooms or buildings constructed, leased or set apart for that purpose: provided, that treasury of said city or village, to the credit of the library fund, and shall be kept separate and apart from other moneys of such city or village, and drawn upon by the proper officers of said city or village upon the properly authenticated vouchers of the library board. Said board shall have the power to occupy, lease or erect an appropriate building for the use of said library, not exceeding from the library fund in any one year in building, more than half the income of such year and shall have power to appoint a suitable librarian and necessary assistants, and shall in general carry out the spirit and intent of this act in establishing and maintaining the best library and reading room with the means at their disposal: provided, however, that no purchase or lease of land or buildings, and no order or contract for the erection or construction of buildings shall take effect without the previous approval of the mayor and common council of the city, or board of trustees of the village.

SECTION 6. Every library and reading-room established under this act, shall be forever free for the use of the inhabitants of the city or village where located, always subject to such reasonable rules and regulations as the library board may find necessary to adopt and publish, in order to render the use of said library and reading-room of the greatest benefit to the greatest number, and may exclude and cut off from the use of said library and reading-room any and all persons who shall willfully violate such rules.

SECTION 7. The said board of directors shall make an annual report to the city council or board of trustees, stating the condition of their trust, the various sums of money received from the library fund and from all other sources, and how much moneys have been expended; the number of books and periodicals on hand; the number added by purchase, gift or otherwise during the year; the number lost or missing; the number of books loaned out, and the general character and kind of such books, with such other statistics, information and suggestions as they may deem of general interest.

SECTION 8. All taxes levied under this act shall be levied and collected in like manner with other general taxes in said city or village.

SECTION 9. Any person desirous of making donations of money or real estate for the benefit of such library shall have the right to vest the title to the money or real estate so donated, in the board of directors created under this act, to be held and controlled by such board, when accepted according to the terms of the deed of gift, devise or bequest of such property; and as to such property, the said board shall be held and considered to be special trustees.

SECTION 10. This act shall take effect from and after its passage and publication.

Approved March 21, 1872.

Source: General Laws Passed by the Legislature of Wisconsin in the Year 1872. . . . Madison, Wisconsin: Atwood & Culver, State Printers, 1872. Ch. 80.

APPENDIX VII

GIFTS ($1,000 OR MORE) FOR PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN WISCONSIN, 1882-1900

Year	Place	Donor	Amount	Specification	Recipient
1882	LaCrosse	C. C. Washburne (bequest)	$ 50,000	General	Public Library (to be estab.)
1886	Ashland	Emmeline E. Vaughn	75,000	General	Trust
	Grand Rapids	Thomas B. Scott (bequest)	5,000	General	Public Library (to be estab.)
	Merrill	Thomas B. Scott (bequest)	10,000	General	Public Library (to be estab.)
1887	Menomonie	Andrew Tainter	125,000	General	Trust
1890	Beaver Dam	John J. Williams	30,000	Bldg: 25,000 End.: 5,000	Public Library
	Two Rivers	Mrs. Joseph Mann	1,000	Building	Two Rivers L.A.
1892	Grand Rapids	J. D. Witter	5,000	End.	Public Library
1895	Oshkosh	Mrs. Marshall Harris (beq., city to match.)	75,000	General	Public Library (to be estab.)
1896	Kenosha	George Yule	1,000	General	Kenosha P.L.A.

Year	Place	Donor	Amount	Specification	Recipient
1896	Kenosha	Edward Bain	$ 1,000	General	Kenosha P.L.A.
1897-1898	Delavan	James Aran (bequest)	20,000	General	Public Library (to be estab.)
	Kenosha	Edward Bain	2,000	General	Public Library
1897-1898	Kenosha	George Gale	1,000	General	Public Library
	Menasha	Elisha D. Smith	32,000	Bldg: 22,000 End.: 10,000	Public Library (to be estab.)
	Milwaukee	Caroline Metcalfe	10,000	Books	Public Library
	Milwaukee	August Uihlein	5,000	Books	Public Library
	Milwaukee	Guido Hansen	1,000	Books	Public Library
	Mosinee	Joseph Dessert	5,000	General	Trust
	Oshkosh	Philetus Sawyer	25,000	General	Public Library
	Racine	William Horlick	1,000	Books	Racine L.A.
	Racine	M. B. Erskine (bequest)	1,000	Books	Racine L.A.
	Richland Center	J. W. Lybrand	1,000	General	Free Lib. Assn.
1899-1900	Burlington	Alexander Burger	5,000	Building	Public Library (to be estab.)
	Grand Rapids	J. D. Witter	5,000	Endowment	Public Library

Year	Place	Donor	Amount	Specification	Recipient
1899-1900	Kenosha	Zalmon G. Simmons	$170,000	General	Public Library (to be estab.)
	Lake Mills	L. D. Fargo	6,000	Building	Public Library (to be estab.)
	Marinette	Isaac Stephenson	50,000	Building	Public Library (to be estab.)
	Menomonie	Andrew Tainter (bequest)	65,000	Endowment	Trust
	Oshkosh	William Bedient (bequest)	3,500	General	Public Library
	Stanley	D. R. Moon (bequest)	12,000	Building	Public Library

Note: The reporting schedule reflects that used by the Free Library Commission, 1897-1900.